

Deposed emir seeks Kuwait's support

KUWAIT (R) — Qatar's deposed emir arrived in Kuwait on Saturday on an Arab Gulf tour intended to rally support for his return to power. Officials said Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah received Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani who was ousted by his son Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani in a bloodless coup in June. The former emir has said his tour of Arab Gulf states was aimed at rallying support for his return to power in Qatar, which controls the world's single largest gas field and the world's third largest proven gas reserves. The official Kuwait news agency earlier called the visit a "brotherly" one. Sheikh Khalifa is also expected to visit Saudi Arabia and Oman, diplomats said. He has already been to the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. Differences between Qatar and the other five Arab Gulf allies rose to the surface on Dec. 6 when the current emir refused to attend the closing session of the annual Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit. Qatar, which is scheduled to host next year's GCC summit, is opposed to the method used in appointing a new GCC secretary general when Doha's candidate was dropped in favour of a Saudi national.

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Algerian president to name new premier soon

PARIS (R) — Algerian President Liamine Zeroual is expected to appoint a new prime minister this week to replace Modad Sifi, the Algerian government-controlled newspaper El Moudjahid said. Mr. Sifi, in office since April 1994, tendered his resignation after Mr. Zeroual's election victory in November but the president asked him to stay in office until the end of the year. El Moudjahid gave no details of the make-up of the next government or who would become Algeria's sixth prime minister in less than six years. Independent newspapers reported this week that Mr. Zeroual had picked his office head, Ahmed Ouyahia, to replace Mr. Sifi. The newspapers speculated that the government line-up would include ministers drawn from three opposition parties — the moderate Islamist movement Hamas, the anti-fundamentalist Culture and Democracy Rally and the small Algerian Renewal Party. Leaders of the three parties took part in the presidential poll on Nov. 16 which was won by Mr. Zeroual with more than 61 per cent of the vote amid a large turnout despite threats by Muslim guerrillas to kill voters.

Haiti thanks Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Haitian Prime Minister Smark Menzel expressed his deep thanks and appreciation to His Majesty King Hussein and the government of Jordan for the effective contribution of Jordanian Armed Forces within the U.N. multi-national forces and the U.N. mission in Haiti. In a message sent to Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the Haitian prime minister stressed the fact that Jordan's response to international humanitarian efforts was unmatched at a crucial stage of Haiti's history. This response was clearly manifested in sending Jordanian security forces to help restore democracy in Haiti, the prime minister said.

Egypt sacks railways head

CAIRO (R) — President Hosni Mubarak sacked the head of Egypt's railway authority Saturday after 77 people were killed in two accidents in nine days which both involved trains ramming into the back of each other. Mr. Mubarak ordered in a presidential decree that Abdul Salam Shaath be relieved of his post immediately following the worst accident in the Egyptian railways for more than 15 years. Newspapers reported Saturday that two people were killed and eight injured when a northbound train from the southern Miya province rammed into the back of another that was heading for the capital. The driver of the Miya train and a passenger were killed in the collision. Officials at the scene blamed thick fog for the crash, the government newspaper Akbar Al Youm said. Last Thursday, 75 people were killed and 76 injured when a crowded workers' train rammed a passenger train from behind in thick fog in the town of Badrasheen. The train drivers blamed stalled control systems and faulty signals for the collision that highlighted the poor safety record of level-crossing systems.

EU to set up Cyprus initiative

ROME (AFP) — Italy is to launch a peace mission for the divided Mediterranean island of Cyprus shortly after it takes over the rotating European Union presidency next week. Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli said Friday. She said a top foreign ministry official, Emanuele Scammarca, would visit Cyprus, Greece and Turkey from Jan. 4 to 6, to see how the EU could help with the peace process. Cyprus is divided into a Greek Cypriot region, whose government is recognised by the United Nations and the world community, and a northern Turkish Cypriot region, where the administration is recognised only by Turkey. Talks have been going on at the U.N. for several years on trying to resolve the dispute. Italy will be taking over the six-month presidency from Spain on Jan. 1.

UNHCR begins probe in Sudan

GENEVA (AFP) — The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has launched an inquiry into claims by Ethiopia that refugees in Sudan had been arrested, tortured and murdered, a spokeswoman said on Saturday. "We are taking these allegations very seriously," UNHCR spokeswoman Ruth Marshall said. A letter from the Ethiopian government to the UNHCR, made public Thursday, gave a detailed account of how Ethiopian refugees in Sudan were the victims of "harassment and continuous persecution," she said. Ethiopia said two refugees had been killed, one tortured and 220 arrested, including 53 whose whereabouts were not known and 35 who were expelled back to Ethiopia. Ms. Marshall said the UNHCR was checking out each case cited.

King expresses hope East Jerusalem will be capital of Palestine

LONDON (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has said that Jordan believes Jerusalem should remain a symbol for peace for all believers in God, and sovereignty over the city should not belong to any single state.

In an interview with the London-based Al Wasai magazine, the King said that Arab Jerusalem has been an occupied city since 1967, expressing hope that "it will become the capital of Palestine as the western part of the city is the capital of Israel, something which has not been recognised until now."

In reply to a question about apprehension over the democratic experiment in Jordan, the King said: "Yes, I have some apprehension over the democratic experiment because I have lived through this experiment in the 1950s. Naturally, we were shocked and met with a setback at the time with regard to democracy and with regard to all what we had hoped to achieve for Jordan to become an example for others. For this reason, I am apprehensive about the possibility of some people using democracy as a weapon against democracy in this country. I hope that all citizens will rise to a high degree of awareness to prevent this from happening and about these people's designs and I hope we all will reach a stage where we can act responsibly and participate in the decision-making process and in the shaping of the future."

Asked about the U.S.

administration's response to Jordan's military requirements, the King said the response has been encouraging:

"We are hoping to achieve good results from a visit by the U.S. defence secretary to Jordan on Jan. 3-5."

Asked about Jordanian-Saudi relations, the King said that these relations were very good and on the way to returning to their required level of brotherly ties.

"I hope the circumstances will allow my brother King Fahd and myself to meet soon, and I am confident that the meeting will open the way for the return of bilateral relations to their

prospects of dismemberment and disintegration, with all the danger that these developments might entail."

"Iraq's unity is our constant concern and ways to save Iraq from the suffering both in terms of the deprivation of its people of democracy, and respect of human rights or the embargo, is our duty and our service to the Iraqi people which we ought to perform with all our potential. This is our task now since we have failed over the past two years to establish a constructive dialogue with the Iraqi regime with the aim of saving Iraq from its present plight," the King said.

Asked about relations with Kuwait he said: "We do not attach any conditions to resuming these relations. We have taken all the initiatives hoping that the relations will return to normal. But we cannot offer any more in this respect. I believe it is a matter of time when our Kuwaiti brothers choose to cooperate and establish solid relations based on sound foundations, we will welcome them to our framework of the agreed programme."

Replies to a question about the Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations, the King expressed hope that the two sides will achieve progress so that a comprehensive peace in the region could be established.

On a future Jordanian-Palestinian confederation the King said that there would not be any talk about such confederation at this stage before the Palestinians attain

their full rights on their national soil in a manner acceptable to them.

"Then and in an atmosphere of freedom and brotherly dialogue and on a background of strong relations the people can determine their position regarding the future and the nature of relations."

"We will continue to help the Palestinian brothers with our full power and potential and under all circumstances until they arrive at their aspired objectives," the King said.

Asked about Israeli passports issued to Arab residents of Jerusalem and whether

Jordan will be ready to issue permanent passports to the Palestinians, the King said:

"If it is a matter of passports the question should be discussed with the Palestinian brothers. But I believe that the Jerusalem question is one that has been placed on the agenda of the final stage of the negotiations which starts after the Israeli elections and the settlement of the Jerusalem issue within the framework of the agreed programme."

O Iraq, the King said: "Iraq is very important to us and we consider the suffering of the Iraqi people as our own. We are deeply affected with what has been going on. We believe that Iraq is at the threshold of very difficult stage: Either the country and its unity are saved through the negotiations or the Iraqis themselves following the tragic events that they have had talked about which they had been talking. As to the future of Iraq, the Iraqis could find reassurance through a dialogue among the representatives of various groups and factions to shape their future through an acceptable formula."

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Rocket attacks kill 8 in Kabul

KABUL (AFP) — Eight Afghan civilians were killed and 41 injured when a deadly new wave of rocket and shell salvos struck the besieged capital Kabul, witnesses and doctors said Saturday.

Four separate barrages of artillery shells and rockets fired by the Taliban militia blockading Kabul hit three areas of the city between late Thursday and late Friday, defence officials and witnesses said.

The latest series of barrages came as a Taliban spokesman in Pakistan roundly rejected an unconditional offer by Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani that he travel to opposition strongholds — including the Taliban centre at Kandahar — for talks on resolving the country's protracted civil war.

A heavy artillery attack late Thursday killed two children, two women and a man in a city street instantly, while three other victims of the assault died later in hospital, they added.

A further 23 people were

wounded in that attack, while another 18 were injured in three other attacks late Friday, doctors at Kabul's hospitals told AFP.

Two of the salvos — one of artillery shells and one BM 21 rockets — struck a densely populated high-rise residential zone in the east of the war-battered capital Friday, injuring eight residents.

"It is miraculous that more people were not hurt or killed," said Rafiq Homat, whose fourth-floor flat was peppered with artillery shrapnel and had its windows blown out.

"We were in bed when there was an almighty explosion very close by. Then a huge fragment of shell hit the wall just a few feet above my head, leaving a deep crater."

"Some people's bones were completely shattered by the blasts, while hundreds of residents lost their windows, which is very difficult to deal with in the middle of a cold winter," he said.

One of the eight shells and rockets plummeted through the roof of a room in a

top-floor flat, but the owners of the apartment escaped unscathed, neighbours said.

The attacks, over a period of 24 hours, marked the fiercest and deadliest series of barrages of Kabul over recent weeks, and came after the Kabul administration appeared to extend an olive branch to other warring factions.

The defence ministry here accused the Taliban of launching the attacks from their bases south of Kabul and expressed shock at the barrages.

"We are surprised that after we offered them the opportunity of talks that they have again fired rockets randomly and deliberately at the city," a defence source said.

In an unprecedented show of apparent flexibility, Mr. Rabbani on Wednesday agreed to travel to provincial opposition bases to discuss the formation of a broad-based government for war-torn Afghanistan.

The offer includes possible talks with all factional lead-

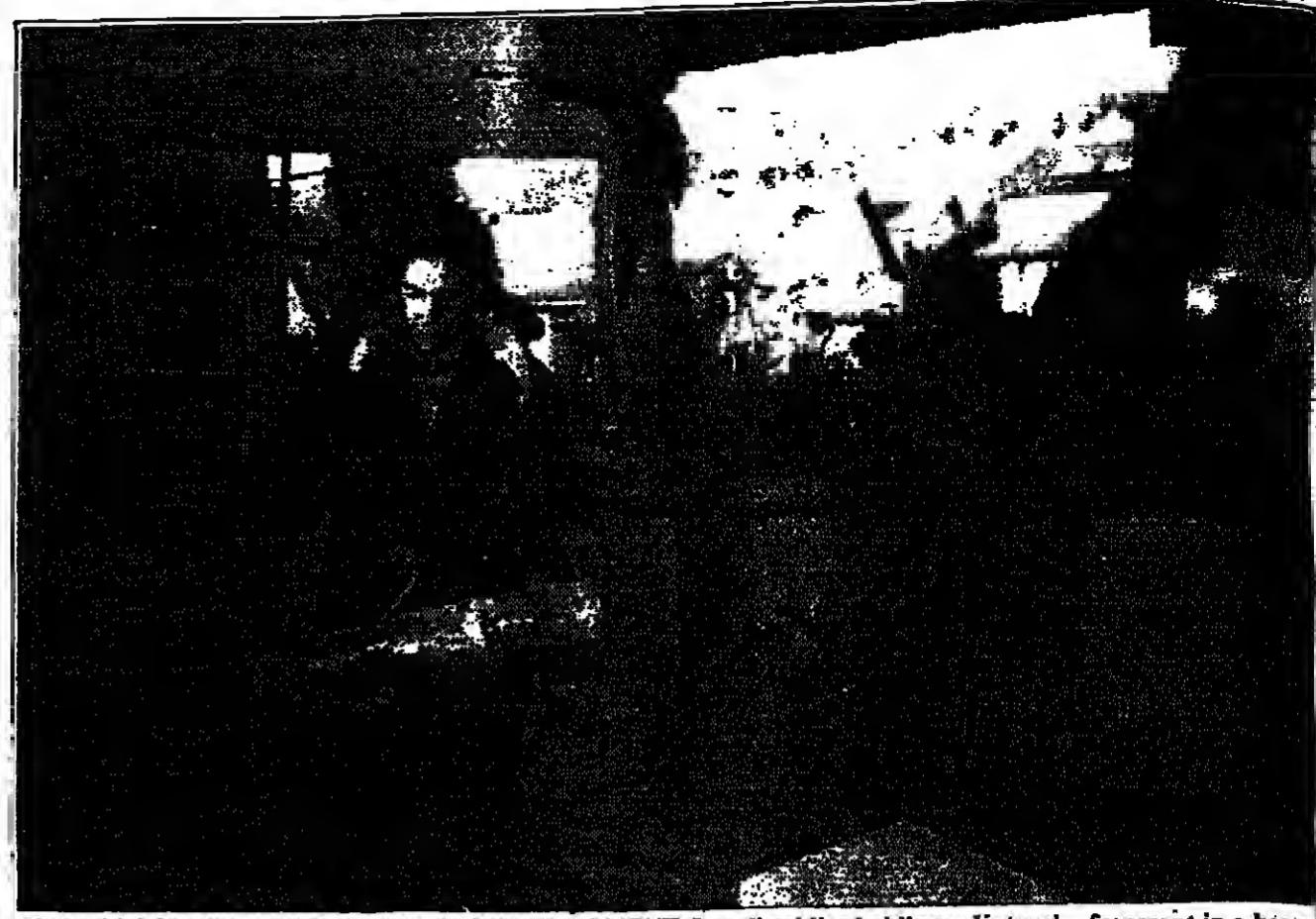
ers, including the Taliban, Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum and with ex-premier Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, top officials here said.

It was the first time the president or any member of his beleaguered government had proposed such talks outside of Kabul, and came amid growing speculation that top administration figures are already talking to leaders of other groups, including Mr. Dostum and Mr. Hekmatyar's parties.

However the Taliban, who regard the Kabul government as illegitimate, have dismissed Mr. Rabbani's offer as a manoeuvre to gain time for military preparations at a time when his administration is under pressure.

More than 60 civilians have been killed in rocket and shell attacks on Kabul during December, while hundreds of others have been injured.

The government has routinely blamed the attacks on the Taliban, who are besieging the city on three sides and threatening to seize it and topple Mr. Rabbani.



ISRAELI SOLDIER HOLDING KATYUsha FRAGMENT: Israeli soldier holding a Katyusha fragment in a home demolished by the rocket early Saturday. Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon fired Katyusha rockets at Israel causing damage but no casualties. See Page 1 story (Reuters photo)

First Afghan film since fall of communism released

KABUL (R) — An Afghan film company released on Saturday the first feature-length movie completed entirely in Afghanistan since the fall of the communist government early in 1994.

The director of the production company, Sidiq Barmaque, said problems caused by the civil war meant it took two and a half years to make the movie, called "Urur" (Ascension).

"We finished filming in just three months in the summer of 1993," he said. "But a lack of electricity, equipment that kept breaking down and a shortage of funds meant we couldn't get the post-production work done until now."

"When we tried to buy spare parts for some of our gear from the United States the suppliers wanted to buy the equipment as museum pieces," he added.

The two and a half hour epic traces the transformation of a humble village baker into a Mujahedeen fighter battling Soviet forces occupying Afghanistan during the 1980s.

The company, Afgan Films, had to shoot the film in the north-central province of Parwan because it was the only area it had access to that was free of fighting between rival Mujahedeen factions.

Those factions are still battling one another for control of the country.

In a tragic twist to the film's production, two of the stars were killed this year when a rocket exploded on the studios during the battle for Kabul between pro-government forces and the Taliban Islamic militia.

All the actors in the movie were Afghans and all but one were amateurs, although Mr.

Barmaque said those who played Russians were too embarrassed to attend the premiere.

"They did a wonderful job. But I think they feel they played such convincing roles that they were ashamed to come and admit it was really them," he said.

Producer Noor Hashem Abir said the movie cost \$5 million afghanis (\$40,000) to make and was funded by the government and private investors.

"They all wanted to help re-establish the important role of theatre in this country before it was suppressed and controlled by the old regime," Mr. Abir said.

"We hope that by making this film and the two others we are planning, we will be able to re-equip ourselves and re-train people to get the Afghan film industry moving again," he added.

Family of Jihad leader barred from leaving Gaza Strip

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Israeli authorities have barred the family of Islamic Jihad leader Ramadan Abdallah Shallah from leaving the Gaza Strip to join him in Beirut, the Palestinian militant group said Saturday.

Maha Abdul Kassar Nasser and her three children tried to leave self-ruled Gaza at the Rafah crossing with Egypt on Friday, the group said from Damascus. But they were stopped by Israeli authorities who control the borders.

In Gaza City, friends of the family said the wife arrived for a visit after Mr. Shallah was named to head Islamic Jihad in late October. She

came from the United States while her husband travelled directly to Beirut.

The children are naturalised Americans, Islamic Jihad said.

Mr. Shallah succeeded Fathi Shaqaqi after his assassination Oct. 26 by a suspected Israeli hit squad in Malta. Mr. Shaqaqi was based in the Syrian capital while the new chief has moved his headquarters to Damascus.

The new leader of Islamic Jihad, which has mounted anti-Israeli attacks aimed at sabotaging the autonomy deals, left Gaza in 1984 to study in Egypt, Britain and the United States before settling in Lebanon.

Palestinian media favours Fatah party in elections

JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinian radio and television overwhelmingly favour candidates from Yasser Arafat's Fatah party in the campaign to elect the first self-rule government Jan. 20, a media watchdog group said Saturday.

"A very sizeable imbalance exists between the different candidates' and parties' access to Palestinian public radio and television," according to a Dec. 15-25 survey completed by Reporters Without Borders.

The Palestinian election campaign officially started Dec. 30 and runs through Jan. 18 to elect an 87-member autonomy council and a president to the executive council.

Fatah, the main faction of Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), is the only party to have had real access to television, with one hour, 11 minutes, 35 seconds of air time during the survey period.

The Palestinian People's Party, a communist group, is the only other political faction to have appeared on television and it received only 17 seconds of air time, the report said.

As for overall programming, Fatah received five times more air time than the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), which opposes the PLO peace deal with Israel.

Reporters Without Borders, an independent organisation devoted to freedom of the press, has been monitoring the Palestinian media and press for the upcoming elections. Fifteen observers are participating in the project, financed by the European Union.

The historic first elections are being held as part of the PLO-Israeli accord to establish Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and in towns on the West Bank. About 700 candidates have registered to run for the 87-member autonomy council.

Egyptian government bans female circumcision in hospitals — again

CAIRO (AP) — The government has forbidden state hospitals to perform female circumcisions, just months after authorising them to do so in an attempt to curb botched operations by clumsy amateurs.

State hospitals were quietly told two months ago to stop performing the procedure, but the decision was never publicly announced. A ministry of health official who confirmed the ban attributed the reversal to pressure from women's and human rights groups and fear of U.S. aid sanctions.

Female circumcision, widespread in Egypt and other parts of Africa, is condemned by critics as genital mutilation. The procedure ranges from clipping the tip of a young girl's clitoris to cutting away even the outer sex organs.

Women's and human rights groups were outraged 14 months ago when the government decided to lift a 1959 ban on performing the procedure in state hospitals,

arguing that implied state sanction of genital mutilation.

Hassan Al Kallash, under-secretary of health, said another reason the ban was reintroduced was the fear that U.S. aid for Egyptian health projects could be cut off over the controversy.

But the government says opponents of hospital circumcisions ignore a crucial fact: Unlicensed practitioners and Egyptian officials quickly promised to outlaw the operation.

They later backpedalled, arguing a ban would not stop so widespread a practice. Instead, in October 1994, the health ministry decreed that government hospitals must set aside one day a week for the operation.

Al Kallash maintained that the decree's opponents failed to realise that in its efforts to halt the practice, the government is up against a deeply rooted tradition.

"People misunderstood us. They thought we were supporting the operation, which

is not true," Mr. Al Kallash said. "We are against it, but we could not change the traditions of the society overnight. We were being attacked by people who did not understand Egyptian culture."

Many Egyptians follow the tradition blindly or think the operation curbs a girl's sexual appetite. Others believe it is ordained by Islam, although Muslim scholars are at odds over this. Some Egyptian Christians follow the practice, too.

When the government overturned the 1959 ban, Health Minister Ali Abdul Fattah argued that allowing circumcision in hospitals would make it safe. He said hospitals also would counsel parents against the practice, warning of its futility and danger.

Eventually, he maintained, the decree and the warnings could eradicate the practice.

But Nezar Lotfy, a lawyer with the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights, said that based on comments from

people she has counselled against circumcision, she believed the Egyptian public saw the decree as approving the operation.

"They would say, 'The minister said it is all right. What do you know that the minister doesn't?'" Ms. Lotfy explained.

Mr. Al Kallash said the worst pressure to reverse the decree came from abroad. He cited attacks on Egypt's delegation at September's U.N. Women's Conference in Beijing. Mr. Abdul Fattah also said he was plagued by questions from U.S. officials during a Washington visit.

A New York-based group called Equality Now sent letters urging women's groups worldwide to protest the decree. The idea of using U.S. aid as a weapon against the ruling was raised in Congress.

The U.S. Agency for International Development, which administers the \$2 billion annual aid to Egypt, has long opposed any step that would make circumcision medically acceptable.

Turkish forces kill 10 rebels

TURCELLI, Turkey (R) — Turkish security forces killed 10 rebel Kurdish guerrillas and wounded one on Saturday for the loss of three of their own six wounded in one of the biggest clashes in the east recently, officials said.

They said security forces backed by Sikorsky assault helicopters and fighter planes, killed 10 members of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) in a three-day-long operation in Dirigi and Kangal districts of Sivas province against rebels.

Two members of a crack police team and a soldier were also killed and six other soldiers wounded in the battle.

The officials said the wide-ranging operation was aimed at 150 members of the PKK who had recently fled to Sivas province from the neighbouring Tunceli to escape from the army's year-old crackdown on rebels.

British defence secretary in UAE

DUBAI (AFP) — British Defence Secretary Michael Portillo arrived in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Saturday as London pursued negotiations on a military pact that could help it to promote arms sales to the Gulf nation.

Mr. Portillo, making his first trip here since his appointment in July, met UAE Defence Minister Sheikh Mohammad Ben Rashid Al Maktoum in Dubai, the British embassy said.

He was due to hold talks Sunday with Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Khalifa Ben Zayed Al Nahyan and Army Chief-of-Staff Sheikh Mohammed Ben Zayed Al Nahyan.

"It's part of a regular dialogue. We have a close relationship with the Emirates and this is one way of maintaining it," British embassy spokeswoman Heidi Minshall told AFP.

Western diplomats said Mr. Portillo was apparently seeking to push for the con-

cclusion of a defence agreement which Britain and the UAE have been negotiating for more than a year.

About asked about this possibility, Ms. Minshall said: "I am sure it will come up during the talks, but it is not the primary goal of the visit."

British officials said last month the agreement could be signed within weeks but they did not give details of its terms.

Military sources said a defence pact would support Britain's attempts to sell weapons to the UAE, which is involved in bolstering its army.

Britain lost out to France in a \$235 million anti-submarine helicopter deal struck with the UAE early this year. But it hopes to win a contract to sell frigates to the Emirates at a cost of more than one billion dollars.

The UAE is already tied to a defence pact with France, its main weapon supplier and trading partner.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773/11-19

PROGRAMME TWO

16:04 ... *Isha*
16:28 ... *Shelly Duvall's Bedtime Stories*
16:38 ... Feature film: "The Dream Team"
16:49 ... *The Adventures of the Black Stallion*
16:50 ... *Sky Trackers*
17:00 ... Children's Programme — C'Est Pas Sorcier
17:30 ... *Fruits Et Legumes*
18:00 ... Doc. — *L'intégrale*
9:00 ... *News in French*
19:15 ... Magazine — *Sports Et Musique*
19:35 ... *News Headlines*
20:00 ... *Cinema, Cinema*
20:25 ... *The Bold and the Beautiful*
21:10 ... *.. The American Chart Show*
22:00 ... *News in English*
22:25 ... Feature film: *A Different Affair*
23:59 ... Christmas mass from the Vatican — live

PRAYER TIMES

05:05 ... Fajr
06:28 ... *(Sunrise) Dhuhr*
11:35 ... Dhruh
14:19 ... *Asr*
16:41 ... Maghrib

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel: 601740
Assembly of God Church, Tel: 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel: 624590, Church of the Annunciation Tel: 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel: 661757
Teresianine Church Tel: 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel: 623541.
Amenian Catholic Church Tel: 632626
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel: 771331.
St. Epiphany Church Tel: 771751.
Amenian International Church Tel: 60256.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 624328.
Coptic-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel: 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel: 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel: 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel: 81295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be sunny in the morning

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

and cold at night. Scattered rains are expected in the northern parts of the Kingdom. Temperatures will be around their annual average. Wind will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 5 / 15
Aqaba 8 / 22
Deserts 4 / 16
Jordan Valley 9 / 23

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Aqaba 22 Humidity reading: Amman 33 per cent. Aqaba 34 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police (19

Home News

Jordan Times, Sunday, December 31, 1995

3

Court of Cassation upholds Criminal Court rulings to execute three convicts

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Court of Cassation Saturday upheld a ruling by the Criminal Court to execute three men in three separate cases, according to the attorney general at the Criminal Court Ghazi Azar.

In the first case, Othman Abu Lawi, 45, was sentenced to death for raping his niece in May.

According to court papers, the 13-year-old's parents left their daughter with their uncle "to take care of her while they left to the West Bank."

The documents added that during that period the convict raped the girl twice. The child, who was not identified, became pregnant and in the seventh month her family discovered her pregnancy and informed the police.

The second convict Daoud Asmar, 25, was also sentenced to death for sodomising, then killing a

15-year-old boy in a farm in Sahab in May of 1995.

According to court documents, the convict lured the victim, who was not identified, to his father's farm and tried to sodomise him.

In his confession to police, Abdul Karim said that he tried to rape the youth but after he failed he threw him to the ground and the youth fainted, the documents said.

Abdul Karim then used a knife to stab him in the chest and slit his male organ, the document added.

The convict buried the murder victim near the pool and then fled.

He was apprehended by authorities two months after the murder was committed, the document said, adding that Abdul Karim confessed and re-enacted the crime.

The third case involved a 28-year-old man who was sentenced to death after being convicted of murdering a youth in Baq'a on Oct. 29, 1994.

According to court docu-

ments, Abdul Karim Da'leh lured a 17-year-old youth to an empty pool in Al-Talibieh Camp in a Baq'a farm and tried to sodomise him.

In his confession to police, Abdul Karim said that he tried to rape the youth but after he failed he threw him to the ground and the youth fainted, the documents said.

Abdul Karim then used a knife to stab him in the chest and slit his male organ, the document added.

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According to court docu-

Man surrenders to police after killing two sisters

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

ZARQA — Two Zarqa women were shot and killed by their brother Friday morning in the latest crime of honour to be reported in the Kingdom this year, official sources said.

The women, identified as Kifaya A., 23 and her sister Nadia, 32, were shot and killed by their brother Mohammad A., 38, who first fled the scene, but surrendered to the authorities Saturday morning, according to a police official.

The man confessed to the double murder, the official told the Jordan Times. The official declined to release any details concerning the crime.

A 55-year-old man from the vegetable market in Al-Sa'edh street, where the incident occurred, said he heard Kifaya (one of the victims) screaming from the first floor window of her house "my brother killed my sister and he wants to kill me."

He added that he saw Kifaya smash the glass of apartment window and jump out, falling through the awning of a shop below, to the ground.

"Kifaya fell on her head, tried to get up again, but fell back. Then her brother appeared at the window and started shooting at her," the man told the Jordan Times.

Another witness who also was present at the busy vegetable market, said she saw Kifaya's brother from the apartment window pointing his pistol towards his sister and shooting at her.

"The first three bullets missed Kifaya but the fourth and fifth struck her in the head, and that was the last thing I saw before I fainted," the 20-year-old woman, who preferred not to be identified, said.

According to the woman, Kifaya and Nadia had a good reputation in the neighbourhood, while their brother, Mohammad, held a criminal record.

"Nadia was married to a man without the knowledge of her brother, and when he learned about it, he killed both his sisters," the woman said.

Another neighbour told the Jordan Times that Mohammad "might have killed his sisters for inheritance reasons."

"Mohammad did not want his sister to inherit money and property" the source said.

Kifaya died instantly while her sister Nadia died on her way to Yajour Hospital of gunshot wounds to the head and chest.

Neighbours said the mother of the victims was rushed to Zarqa Government Hospital following the incident suffering from a nervous breakdown.

Police refused to confirm any of the allegations and said they were questioning the brother.

Kifaya and Nadia became the 12th and 13th women reportedly killed in a "crime of honour" in the Kingdom this year.

Police search suspects in connection with killing

Meanwhile, police Saturday were searching for suspects in connection with the murder of an unidentified man, whose body was found Friday in a red suitcase that was left in the south bus terminal near Mamoura Hotel, according to official sources.

An official told the Jordan Times Saturday that the man, apparently in his late 20s, had his throat slit and had also received a blow to the head.

The official said luggage porters in the terminal became suspicious of the red suitcase because it was left alone and called the police.

"At this time, we are still trying to determine the identity of the dead man, and are searching for suspects," the official told the Jordan Times.

TCC not responsible for telephone disruption

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) said Saturday denied it had anything to do with the failure in telephone contacts with Iraq through the Jordanian international circuit.

TCC Director General Walid Dweik told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the TCC can do little about the disruption, for over two weeks now, in telephone contacts between Iraq and Jordan.

The Associated Press agency earlier quoted Iraqi embassy officials in Amman as saying that the telecommunications department in Baghdad was carrying out repair works on the telephone system which was

damaged in the 1991 Gulf war and that this was causing the current disruption of telephone services.

But other sources said the Iraqi authorities have sharply reduced the availability of international telephone lines, apparently to prevent contacts with opposition groups in exile.

Mr. Dweik said the TCC regretted the service had been disrupted, adding that the corporation will make a public announcement when the telephone contacts with Iraq are restored.

Palestinian voters and 670 candidates have signed up for the polls in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, including Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem.

Fifty-one representatives will be elected to the council in the West Bank and 37 in the Gaza Strip.

Voters will also elect the president of an executive council to be chosen by the larger body, with Mr. Arafat expected to easily defeat his only challenger, 72-year-old feminist Samiha Khalil, who

opposes the autonomy deals with Israel.

Ms. Khalil says that if elected, she will work to scrap the Israel-PLO peace agreement she dismisses as a sellout.

Ms. Khalil is aware her's is an uphill battle and that Mr. Arafat will probably win. She says she is using the campaign mainly as a platform for her criticism of Mr. Arafat's Palestinian Authority and to make Israel see reason.

"I am entering the race to raise my voice," Ms. Khalil

Water pipeline project to supply tourist facilities, residences in Wadi Mousa area

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation is implementing water and sewage projects in the Wadi Mousa area, which includes Petra and the towns of Wadi Mousa and Taybet Zaman, as part of ongoing government endeavours to promote tourism in southern Jordan, according to Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Isheida Saturday.

The contracted company will lay the pipeline, which will draw water from two water wells in Ma'an, and will install two pumping stations along the line as well as build a reservoir to store water in the district, according to Mr. Afaneh.

Speaking after signing a contract with ENEX Contracting Corporation for laying a 24.5-kilometre length pipeline in that region, the minister said the pipeline will reach hotels in the Wadi Mousa district, which, until now, have not been supplied with running water.

The minister acknowledged the need for the supply of water services in Wadi Mousa, an area which has been witnessing a tourism boom but added that tourist facilities there were set up speedily in the area without due consideration to overall government plans for laying out roads, electricity and water networks also for the Wadi Mousa area.

The sewage project estimated at \$10 million, will be financed through a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

According to Abdul Majid Afaneh, ENEX general manager, who signed the contract with the minis-

ter, the JD 1.75 million project entails laying pipelines to provide hotels with 150 cubic metres of water per hour.

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Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Isheida Saturday signs a contract with a local contracting corporation for the installation of a water pipeline to supply the Wadi Mousa region (Petra photo)

of the Dead Sea, and said the Ministry of Water and Irrigation will supply these hotels with the infrastructure of water in accordance with overall government plans for laying out roads, electricity and water networks in the region.

There were disputes between the government and investment companies over the construction of four hotels in the east coast of the Dead Sea.

Investors of Dead Sea projects have previously complained that the government was not providing sufficient incentives to investors by not providing the infrastructure required to implement tourism projects in the area.

contracts.

According to the minister, following the signing ceremony at his office, Dr. Isheida said the ministry plans to conduct a feasibility study for the installation of a sewage network and a main wastewater treatment plant also for the Wadi Mousa area.

He said the delay in laying out infrastructure was caused by investors' time-consuming study of the

Court dismisses witness in Abu Rishieh case

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Defence attorneys of Muslim militant Abu Abu Rishieh, accused of slandering His Majesty King Hussein in a newspaper interview in October, Saturday asked the court to dismiss a witness who was due to testify.

Abu Rishieh, spokesman of the illegal Hezb Al-Tahrir (Liberation party), is also charged with belonging to an illegal organisation.

He could face up to three years' imprisonment if indicted.

Abdul Fatah Lafi, one of two attorneys defending Mr. Abu Rishieh, asked the court to dismiss the witness, Abla Diab, who works with the legislative department at the Ministry of Information, because "she was not the witness we requested."

The defence had requested that an expert form the Press and Publications Department at the Ministry of Information testify in the case.

"This witness is not the one we wanted and she is an employee at the legislative department and her job is not related to censorship," Mr. Lafi told the tribunal.

Munjid Namarat, reporter of Al-Hiwar newspaper who interviewed Mr. Abu Rishieh also failed to show up at court.

Presiding Judge Hafez Amin agreed to dismiss the witness and to call in a new witness. He set Jan. 4 to continue hearing the case.

Date set for Bay'at Al-Imama case

The State Court also set Jan. 2 to start hearing the case of 13 people known as Bay'at Al-Imama (pledge of allegiance) accused of sabotage after their trial was postponed indefinitely in October because some of the defendants refused to

appoint attorneys at the State Security Court.

The defendants, who were expelled twice from court for disrupting the session, charged that some of the attorneys were atheists, and that they did not believe in the court's justice system. They said they would defend themselves or God would decide their fate in the case.

They are charged with slander against King Hussein and illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials.

The Jordan Bar Association (JBA) recently appointed seven attorneys to represent the defendants after the court asked the association to do so.

Court sets Jan. 3 to hear CID attack case

A new date, Jan. 3, was also set by the State Security Court to start hearing the case of six people accused of attacking the CID building with bullets from a machine gun, injuring one person then fleeing the scene.

The sixth defendant was apprehended by the authorities three days before the incident occurred.

According to the State Prosecutor's charge sheet, the defendants are charged with the assault and the intent to block the appropriate authorities (CID) from exercising its duties in accordance with the Constitution and the distribution of pamphlets slandering the King.

The charge sheet said that the suspects started their illegal activities in April of 1994 and plotted to carry extremist attacks on tourist and security departments in the Kingdom.

3.1 metre-high JD 64,000 tunnel, which will take two weeks to complete, will be constructed at the ring road which passes through the urban development region where two housing estates have led to the death or injury of several school children.

The road, under which the tunnel will be constructed, runs between a densely populated area and schools.

The construction of the tunnel and its eventual use will hopefully put an end to the carnage on the roads.

At least 2,030 students and residents of the district will use the tunnel on a daily basis, according to Dr. Abbad.

The five-metre wide and

3.1 metre-high JD 64,000 tunnel, which will take two weeks to complete, will be constructed at the ring road which passes through the urban development region where two housing estates have led to the death or injury of several school children.

According to the mayor, municipality teams in the next few days will start digging another tunnel in front of the Specialty Hospital not far from the Sports Stadium in Amman.

The municipality has already constructed five tunnels in the Greater Amman area, two of them within the vicinity of the University of Jordan.

WHAT'S GOING ON

SALE

*Gifts and crafts by Suha Lailas Kassisieh at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of the Noor Al-Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra Street (until Dec. 31).

EXHIBITIONS

*Works by artist Hind Nasser at Darat Al-Funun (until Jan. 6).

*Photography by poet Ibrahim Nasrallah entitled "The Autobiography of an Eye" at Darat Al-Funun, Jabal Weibdeh. (Until Jan. 4).



WINTERTIME WASHING: A family of tent dwellers takes advantage of Amman's sunny days to dry their washing over a picturesque view of the other world (Photo by Yousef Al-Allan)

Arafat enters

(Continued from page 1)

the campaign down to less than two weeks, will "allow for new candidates to come forward and for possible appeals to the commission," Mr. Atn Safia explained.

Mr. Arafat has raised the number of self-rule council seats to be contested from 87 to 88, adding an extra seat for Gaza City, the official told AFP.

More than a million

Strike-weary Bangladesh faces more disruption

DHAKA (AFP) — Thousands of strike-hardened commuters struggled to work in the Bangladesh capital Saturday as the opposition's last attempt in 1995 to topple Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government got under way.

As they did so, the military revealed they had detained at least 5,000 people they termed "terrorists and criminals" in a nationwide clampdown ahead of general elections scheduled for Feb. 7.

Defence sources said a total of 8,000 home-made bombs and explosives and 500 guns had been seized.

Security was tightened throughout the country for Saturday's national blockade of road, rail and water-

ways aimed at forcing Ms. Zia to agree to put a neutral caretaker administration in place ahead of the elections.

There were no immediate reports of clashes.

But a spokesman for the state run Bangladesh Railway said three passengers were injured when an engine and three carriages were derailed on Tongi District on the northern outskirts of Dhaka. "We suspect sabotage," said the spokesman.

Elsewhere train services were halted as "mobs obstructed tracks," rail officials said.

Pickets were also out to protest houses and vehicles circulating in the capital.

Meanwhile a dissident member of Ms. Zia's ruling

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) urged the prime minister to accept opposition demands in the interests of preserving democracy.

Nurul Islam Moni said in a statement issued Saturday that the whole country was being pushed towards disaster, "the economy is shattered and democracy is doomed." "A little more sincerity" from Zia and her main political rival Sheikh Hasina Wajed could overcome the political crisis, he said, pointing out that differences between the two women had narrowed.

Newspaper reports said Ms. Zia's party was considering an opposition proposal to appoint a council of advisors under President

Abdur Rahman Biswas to oversee the upcoming poll.

So far she has rejected their demands for a neutral administration as unconstitutional.

Mr. Biswas told the official BSS news agency that he would exercise his constitutional powers if necessary. Although a member of the BNP he pointed out that as president he no longer belonged to any party and was neutral.

Ms. Hasina Wajed's opposition Awami League has enforced 26 general strikes this year in a bid to bring down Ms. Zia's government. It has called another 48-hour general strike from January 3.

Seoul may send more rice to N. Korea — minister

SEOUL (R) — South Korea may consider offering further rice aid to Pyongyang if it was limited to feeding civilians, media reports quoted Foreign Minister Gong Ro-Myoung as saying Saturday.

"The government may offer rice aid to the North if it could be assured the rice would not be used for military purposes and that accurate investigations are allowed to be made of the food situation there," Yonhap news agency quoted him as saying.

As recently as Wednesday, a day after the North returned five captured South Korean seamen, Seoul ruled out further rice aid to Pyongyang and said the issue depended on the North's willingness to change its bellicose attitude towards Seoul.

The issue of rice aid all depends on North Korea. The return of the Woosung crew should not be seen as a change in North Korea's basic attitude," the deputy unification minister, Song Young-Dae, said.

Pyongyang has kept the world guessing in recent weeks by mixing conciliatory gestures with an alleged military build-up on the border it shares with the South.

Tuesday, Pyongyang released five surviving crew members of the fishing trawler Woosung, plus the remains of three of their colleagues. The boat was seized in May after straying into northern waters.

But North Korean troops are alleged to have staged military manoeuvres near the demilitarized zone separating North from South. The two nations have been technically

cally at war since the 1950-53 Korean war. Flood damage this year has depleted already deteriorating food supplies in the North, and led to an unprecedented appeal for help by the reclusive nation.

United Nations food agencies say nearly 2.1 million children in the North risked starvation.

Mr. Gong said the North was 1.2 million tonnes to three million tonnes short of its grain requirement, local media reported.

He was quoted as saying the amount was too large for a single nation to supply on its own.

As the North normally did not like accepting aid purely from Seoul, a consortium of donor nations including South Korea would be a good solution, local media quoted him as saying.

The government also planned to discuss rice aid at a meeting of officials from South Korea, the United States and Japan on Jan. 24-25 in Hawaii, Mr. Gong said.

South Korea shipped 150,000 tonnes of rice to the North this year but halted the programme in October after Pyongyang rebuffed repeated requests to release the Woosung and its crew.

The Korean National Red Cross said it would send an emergency relief shipment of household necessities next month to North Korea. It has already sent two shipments this year, including blankets and other relief goods.

Cousteau joins Keating Commission to ban the bomb

SYDNEY (AFP) — Renowned French ecologist and explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau has joined the Australian government sponsored commission to ban nuclear weapons in a public relations coup for Prime Minister Paul Keating.

Chinese diplomat Qian Jiadong, a former ambassador for disarmament, has also agreed to serve on the commission, launched by Mr. Keating last month to work out proposals to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

The appointments, announced by Mr. Keating late Friday, came 24 hours after France conducted the fifth in its current series of nuclear tests in the South Pacific, flouting world opinion and drawing another wave of condemnation.

Mr. Cousteau is the second French international celebrity to join the Keating

Commission after former Prime Minister Michel Rocard accepted the appointment last month.

Other members include former U.S. Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, and the winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize Joseph Rothblat.

However, France has said the deliberations of the commission are unlikely to influence French policy or actions.

The latest appointments take to 17 the membership of the commission, which will meet for the first time next month.

Mr. Keating said the commission should be large enough to encompass a range of specialisations needed for its task but not so large as to be unwieldy.

Mr. Cousteau, he said, had a unique international reputation for his work on environmental issues, notably in marine conservation, and a

strong personal commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament.

"With these two most welcome additions I am confident that the commission is appropriately structured to carry out its mandate," Mr. Keating said in a statement.

The commission will meet in Canberra from January 23 to 25 and has been asked to report by August next year.

Australia's ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Butler, who will head the commission, said this month that it would target rogue states and terrorist groups in its campaign for a global ban on nuclear weapons.

Among its major objectives will be new international legislation halting the production of weapons grade fissile material, Mr. Butler said.

Her defection will fuel speculation that a general election will be held next year, although the prime minister may try to carry on until the latest possible date of late spring 1997.

It was the second high-profile defection to hit Mr. Major in three months. In early October, Alan Howarth dropped a bombshell during the runup to the party's annual conference by announcing that he was defecting to the Labour Party, the first Tory MP ever to do so.

Mr. Howarth said at the time that between 30 and 40 other Tory MPs broadly shared his view of the government.

Ms. Nicholson's defection came a day after Conservative Party Chairman Brian Mawhinney told rank-and-file Tories to be prepared for general elections, adding that they could be called next year.

Speaking on British Television, Mr. Mawhinney told local Conservative organisations "to put your association on election alert now."

Ms. Nicholson's defection immediately reduces Mr. Major's commons majority to three, and as a former vice-chairman of the Tory Party her loss will be an unexpected and damaging blow to the government.

She said that she did not propose to run in the next general election, but hoped to pursue a political career as a Liberal Democrat candidate for European Parliament elections.

Ms. Nicholson has been MP for West Bromwich since 1987.

Final results released for Russian parliamentary elections

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia's central electoral commission Friday released final official results for the proportional representation vote in the Dec. 17 parliamentary elections won by the Communist party by a huge margin.

The results came after a final check of all the ballot papers by the commission.

In the proportional representation share of the vote, which filled half of the 450 seats in the state Duma or lower house, the Communist Party came first with 22.3 per cent.

The ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party

(LDPR) came second with 11.18 per cent, followed by the government party Our Home Is Russia with 10.13 per cent and the liberal Yabloko Party with 6.89 per cent.

None other of the 43 parties that competed in the 17 vote to the state Duma crossed the five per cent minimum barrier to be eligible for seats allocated under the proportional system.

The closest to the five-per cent threshold were: Women of Russia (4.61 per cent), the hard left Communists Working Russia-for the Soviet Union

(4.53 per cent) and the Nationalist Congress of Russian Communities (4.31 per cent).

The commission said that 69.2 million people voted, out of 107.5 million registered voters. However 1.32 million ballots were declared invalid.

In the single-mandate constituency voting, which fills the other 225 seats, the Communist Party was also well ahead, having won 58 seats, followed by the leftist Agrarian Party with 20, Yabloko with 14 and Our Home Is Russia with 10.

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Italian Prime Minister Lamberto Dini confirms at a press conference that he hands in his resignation to President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro (AFP photo)

Dini offers resignation, Italy looks to reform

ROME (R) — Prime Minister Lamberto Dini tendered his resignation Saturday, confronting Italy's rival political forces with a choice between a swift general election or working together to give the country the stability it lacks.

Mr. Dini, a former central banker who has headed an unelected government of technocrats since January, held a brief meeting of his 11-month-old cabinet to advise ministers of his decision, an official statement said.

He then went to the Quirinale presidential palace to submit his resignation offer to President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro.

Mr. Scalfaro, the supreme arbiter in Italian politics, has already signalled that he will reserve judgment on the offer and instead send Mr. Dini to parliament for a debate early in January on the country's political future.

The parliament was elected in March 1994 following the disgrace of Italy's old governing class in the country's corruption scandals, but it is so severely splintered that it is incapable of sustaining a political party government.

Ms. Nicholson said she could "no longer remain silent when I see Britain's future endangered by the government's indecision and weak leadership on Europe, and Britain's people neglected by a government which does not care."

Her defection will fuel speculation that a general election will be held next year, although the prime minister may try to carry on until the latest possible date of late spring 1997.

It was the second high-profile defection to hit Mr. Major in three months. In early October, Alan Howarth dropped a bombshell during the runup to the party's annual conference by announcing that he was defecting to the Labour Party, the first Tory MP ever to do so.

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Ms. Nicholson's defection came a day after Conservative Party Chairman Brian Mawhinney told rank-and-file Tories to be prepared for general elections, adding that they could be called next year.

Speaking on British Television, Mr. Mawhinney told local Conservative organisations "to put your association on election alert now."

Ms. Nicholson's defection immediately reduces Mr. Major's commons majority to three, and as a former vice-chairman of the Tory Party her loss will be an unexpected and damaging blow to the government.

She said that she did not propose to run in the next general election, but hoped to pursue a political career as a Liberal Democrat candidate for European Parliament elections.

Ms. Nicholson has been MP for West Bromwich since 1987.

brought in to the breach after media magnate Silvio Berlusconi's conservative coalition government fell apart just seven months into office.

His long-awaited resignation clears the decks for a decision by parliament on whether to move to an early election, some time in the first half of 1996, or pull together in a cross-party government with two years to revise the constitution.

Mr. Dini remains a prime candidate to head whatever government emerges.

The main centre-right and centre-left blocs are far apart on the type of electoral and institutional reforms that will be needed to give Italy a system of durable, efficient government.

But Mr. Berlusconi, leader of the centre-right Freedom Alliance, and his main rival, leftist leader Massimo d'Alema, both pledged Saturday to try to strike a deal.

Mr. Berlusconi, who has softened his strident calls for a snap election at all costs, told La Stampa newspaper Italy needed a political and social truce to modernise its workings and ensure it was in shape to join a single European currency in 1999.

He called for a "transpar-

ent and open alliance between opposites who for once lay down their arms and set aside partisan interests to work for the good of the country."

"When a business is in trouble the first thing you do is reestablish agreement among its shareholders," the billionaire tycoon said.

Mr. d'Alema, whose ex-communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) is the biggest force in the centre-left "Olive Tree" coalition which has supported Mr. Dini in parliament, said the PDS would not reject Mr. Berlusconi's initiative out of hand.

"We want to explore seriously whether there is room for an agreement. We have already lost 18 months on the path to reforms," he told the PDS newspaper L'Unità.

It said the rival blocs should use the first 60 days to explore whether room existed for an agreement on a cross-party government of reforms, with an election in June if they fail.

LONDON (AFP) — A London local authority announced new rules to force nightclubs to provide free water in an attempt to reduce deaths from the drug "ecstasy." Camden Council in north London introduced the new measure — under which "rave" clubs face fines of up to 2,000 pounds (\$3,000) if they do not comply — in the wake of the death of Leah Betts, who died after taking the drug at her 18th birthday party last month. Her death provoked a national debate on the dangers of ecstasy after the girl's parents appealed publicly to young people to learn from their daughter's fate. A Camden spokesman said Friday the move "does not legitimise ecstasy. We are not condoning taking illegal substances. We insist on fire escapes, but we don't condone arsonists." Dehydration has been one of the factors in many of the 50 deaths that have occurred in Britain from taking the drug.

MP held then freed after giving out hashish in the street

ROME (AFP) — A radical Italian member of parliament, Marco Pannella, who is pressing for the legalisation of soft drugs, was arrested Friday after handing out hashish in the centre of Rome. He was freed after questioning by police but is liable for prosecution. Mr. Pannella announced some days ago that he would court imprisonment to further his cause.

Officials said it was not yet clear whether the nine foreigners with Pakistani passports who are alleged to be linked to a worldwide movement calling for "a global jihad" (holy war), officials said Saturday.

An extensive variety of explosive devices and weapons seized from the nine indicated they planned to carry out bombing campaigns, officials said.

One of those arrested in police raids Friday was identified as Adel Annoni, who officials said is believed to be a brother of Ramzi Ahmed Yousef.

Mr. Yousef is on trial in the United States as an alleged mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York.

"He is known to be or reportedly a brother of Ramzi Yousef," interior Secretary Rafael Alunan told a news conference. Mr. Alunan holds an Iraqi passport.

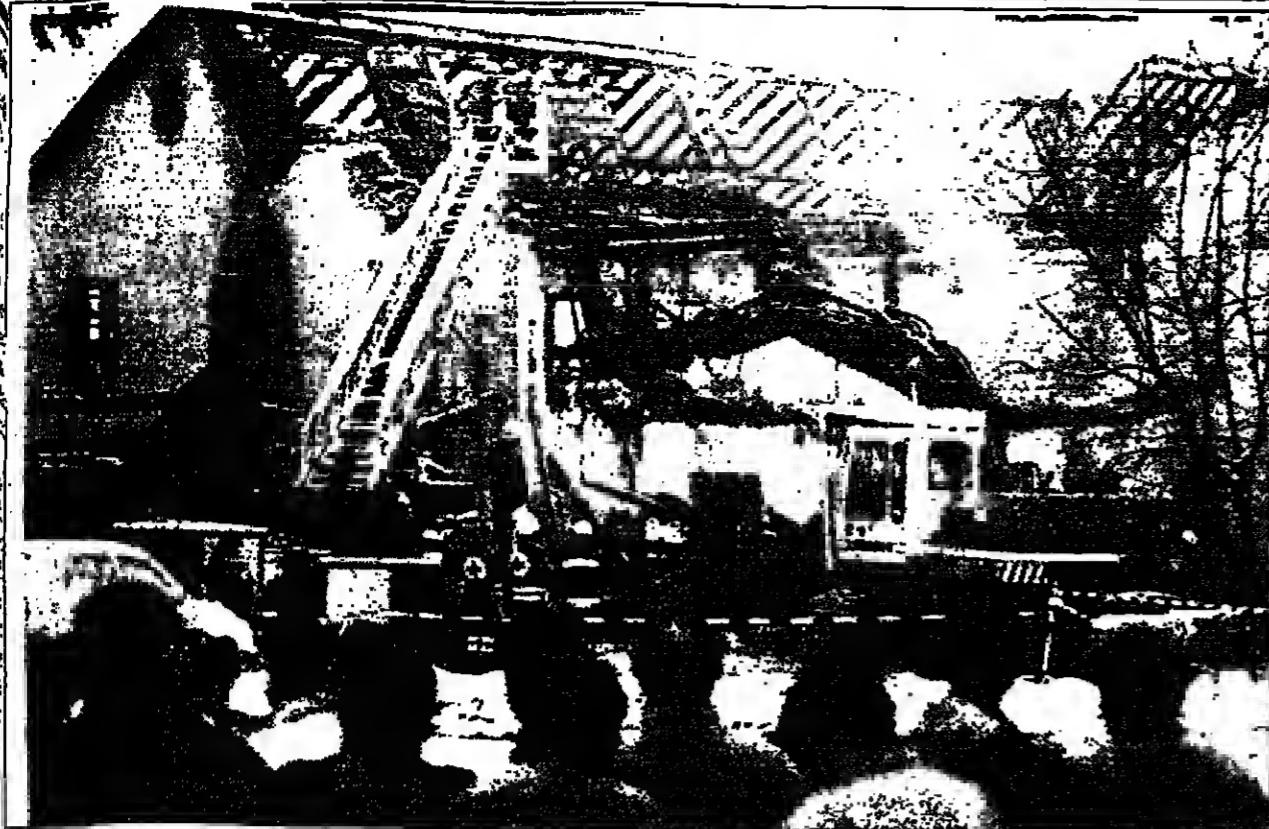
The arrests came more than a week after seven other foreigners with Pakistani passports were captured near Manila allegedly involved in a plot to launch attacks in the country and disrupt next year's summit meeting in the Philippines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

Police said the nine were captured in raids on two Manila apartment buildings.

Police sources said several others were arrested in Friday's operations but this could not be immediately confirmed.

According to our initial





Rescue workers and firemen inspect the remains of a burnt out house of a Turkish family in Schopfheim (AFP photo)

4 dead as fire destroys Turkish home

SCHOPFHEIM, Germany (AFP) — Four members of a Turkish family died and five others were seriously injured Friday when fire swept through their home in this southwestern town, police said.

Firefighters took three hours to extinguish the fierce blaze after a neighbour sounded the alarm at 5:30 a.m. Police said the cause of Friday's fire remained unclear, but Turks

have been the target of racially-motivated arson attacks in recent years.

Rescuers discovered the body of a 38-year-old woman, her nine-year-old son and his 58-year-old grandmother.

Later another body was pulled from the ruins, believed to be that of a 15-year-old boy.

A 19-year-old, the most severely burnt, was rushed to a specialist hospital in

Zurich for treatment. Firemen said they believed the fire had broken out near a wood stove, and police said they had no evidence as yet to suggest foul play.

In addition to the family flat, the building housed the office of a Turkish association and a car repair workshop.

Germany has been badly shaken by a wave of racially-motivated arson attacks,

notably the November 1992 incident at Moelln, in which three Turkish people died, and a May 1993 fire in which five Turks perished in Solingen.

A spate of arson attacks against Turkish interests in recent months has been blamed by police on the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the outlawed separatist organisation.

Yeltsin pledges no U-turn over reforms on return to Kremlin

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin vowed to press ahead with his reform process Friday as he returned to his office in the Kremlin for the first time in two months following heart trouble.

"We will not allow anyone to force us into an about-turn," he pledged as he walked through the Kremlin grounds, just 11 days after watching the Communists notch up big wins in legislative elections.

The Russians have had enough of experiments. Russia is now in a situation where, if you push it back, there could be disaster," he added, quoted by the Interfax news agency.

His comments echoed similar statements after the Communists emerged as the country's strongest party in elections to the state Duma, the lower house of parliament, on Dec. 17.

They topped the proportional representation share of the vote, which fills half of the Duma's 450 seats, with 22.31 percent, well ahead of their closest rivals, the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party on 11.06 percent.

It gave them 100 seats in the Duma, to which they added a further 56 by also topping the poll in single-mandate constituency voting for the other 225 seats.

Pro-reform and government parties did poorly, with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's Our Home Is Russia winning only 9.89 per cent in the proportional vote and 44 seats in the single-mandate vote.

Mr. Yeltsin, 64, also took time during his walk through the Kremlin grounds to praise the "economic stabilisation" of Russia.

"Growth in industrial production has reached two per cent. We are getting out of the crisis," he said.

The decline in industrial production has slowed down sharply this year, but government estimates predict it will still reach three per cent.

The president also pledged not to work 18 hours a day

any more.

"I must not tire myself out." Mr. Yeltsin was hospitalised on Oct. 26 with a myocardial ischaemia, reducing the flow of blood to his heart. He left hospital a month later to recuperate in a sanatorium in the Moscow suburbs.

In recent television appearances he appeared well-rested, perky and slimmer, confounding earlier predictions his political future was over after his second hospitalisation for heart trouble in four months.

The president's health problems risked seriously undermining his political authority this year.

From "chills" to heart attacks in July and October, from extended holidays to spells in hospital, Mr. Yeltsin spent more than half of the year either resting or having treatment.

When in October he was hospitalised for the second time, analysts said his political future was probably over and it was time to name a successor.

However he is almost sure of running in June's presidential elections, barring further health problems, to stem the rise of Communist forces because he remains the reformists' best hope for staying in power.

During his months of enforced rest, Mr. Yeltsin made sure he held onto the key powers of defence, interior, security and foreign policy, including control of the nuclear button.

But in the coming six months he will need to show much dynamism and press a lot of flesh to overcome public disaffection with reforms and widening poverty which fed the Communists' electoral success.

At present, less than three per cent of the Russian population say they have confidence in him.

Former S. Korean president's health improves after ending hunger strike

SEOUL (AFP) — Jailed former President Chun Doo-Hwan, who fell unconscious Friday on the 27th day of a hunger strike, has stopped fasting and his health is improving, a senior doctor said.

"Everything is OK with him and Mr. Chun will be able to take thin rice gruel from Saturday evening and beef soup beginning Sunday," Doctor Lee Kwon-Jon of Seoul Police Hospital told Yonhap news agency.

Dr. Lee said Mr. Chun had eaten a little rice soup that had been brought from his home Friday evening and had even joked about his hunger strike.

"Well now that my fast is over, I think all of those who care about my health will be able to have a happy new year's holiday," Dr. Lee quoted the 64-year-old former head of state as saying.

However Dr. Lee did not predict when Mr. Chun might be well enough to return to Anyang Prison

from the hospital where he was rushed last week after losing 10 kilograms.

Doctors put the ex-president on oxygen and an intravenous drip Friday when he slipped into unconsciousness, weak, dehydrated and emaciated from the fast and a severe bout of diarrhoea.

The former general-turned-president started the hunger strike when he was jailed on Dec. 3 on many charges related to a 1979 coup. He launched the fast to protest his innocence of the charges.

Prosecutors are also set to charge him with accumulating a massive slush fund while in office from 1980 to 1988, and Saturday said they had discovered \$133 million of the black money in an account opened at the Korea Investment Trust Co.

The statement said that through his fast the former head of state had expressed his determination to defend the legitimacy of the fifth republic, as the era of his presidency is known in South Korea.

Sri Lanka rebels ready for talks if army leaves Jaffna

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger guerrillas said Saturday they were ready to resume peace talks with the government if the army left their captured stronghold in the northern town of Jaffna.

The offer came as a rebel suicide bomber blew himself up in the eastern Batticaloa district Saturday morning, wounding an army officer and badly damaging the vehicle he was travelling in.

The rebel Voice of Tigers Radio said the offer by Tiger guerrilla chief Velupillai Prabhakaran was made in a statement read by rebel spokesman Anton Balasingham at a news conference in the north Friday.

The radio, monitored by Reuters in the northern town of Vavuniya, said the

rebels would only resume talks in the presence of foreign mediators.

The offer was similar to one made by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam earlier insisting peace talks could be resumed only after the army left Jaffna town and other areas in the rebels' Jaffna Peninsula stronghold captured in early December.

The Tigers unilaterally broke off a three-month truce and withdrew from peace talks in April.

In Batticaloa, a civilian bystander was badly wounded in the bomb attack by the Tiger suicide bomber near the Kalady bridge, a military spokesman said.

"Parts of the suicide bomber's body were strewn all over the place," the spokesman said.

Military officials said the rebels, fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east of the majority Sinhalese island, are trying to destabilise Batticaloa.

The rebels shifted a large numbers of their fighters there after the fall of Jaffna in early December.

Voice of Tigers Radio quoted Mr. Prabhakaran as saying the mass exodus from Jaffna before its capture by the army showed that the people fully supported the rebels.

The government says more than 50,000 people have died in the 12-year war.

Western aid workers and military officials have said the rebels forced residents to leave Jaffna before the army marched in.

Some 200,000 refugees are now in the northern Vanni mainland, south of Jaffna Peninsula, caught in a tug-of-war between the government, which wants them to return to Jaffna, and the rebels who want them to stay put.

In northwestern Mannar, an eight-year-old girl was killed in an airstrike on rebel positions at Periyapandivirachan Friday, residents wounded in the attack said Saturday.

Eight people badly wounded in the attack by two Hind MI-24 helicopter gunships were brought to the Vavuniya hospital.

The military spokesman said he had no information on the airstrike.

Pakistani strike causes widespread shutdowns

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Life was widely disrupted in Pakistan Saturday in a general strike called by a multi-party religious front which accuses Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of undermining the country's Islamic identity.

Reports from major cities said commercial activity was largely halted with little traffic on roads, amid a heavy police turnout to prevent trouble.

Since U.S. states were restored the right to choose whether to implement the death penalty back in 1976, more than 300 prisoners have been put to death nationwide, 104 of them in Texas alone, according to the Washington-based National Coalition for Abolition of the Death Penalty.

Fifty-eight states have opted to reinstate the death penalty, including New York just this year. According to recent data, more than 3,000 convicts are awaiting execution on death row.

Southern states are those which have executed the most: 36 people were put to death for their crimes in Florida, 29 in Virginia, 22 in Louisiana, and 20 in Georgia since they restored capital punishment.

Last year, 31 people were executed across the country, down from 38 in 1993.

"We are heading towards 100 executions a year," said Steve Hawkins, director of the coalition.

sending Urdu-speaking settlers.

In Lahore, capital of Pakistan's wealthiest and most populous Punjab province, police baton charged to disperse a small crowd burning tires in the streets, witnesses said.

At least three religious activists were slightly injured in a clash with police in Sheikhupura, a Punjab town, witnesses said.

A partial business shutdown was also reported in the north west frontier province, where MYC members marched in the provincial capital, Peshawar, ahead of a planned public meeting in the city centre.

A nearly complete shutdown of markets was reported in southern Karachi, the country's largest city, and long plagued by political violence that has cost more than 1,800 lives this year.

Karachi roads were almost empty, with good strike-breaking from the city's influential ethnic group, the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), repre-

"The prime minister who says deeni madrasas (religious schools) are training centres for terrorists has been proved wrong," the MYC leader said.

He said the government was "undermining the Islamic identity" of Pakistan and waging a campaign against religious institutions and clerics. "We have united to safeguard the country's Islamic ideology," he added.

Mr. Noorani also accused the government of toadying to the anti-fundamentalist line of the United States and the West, saying

"The people of Pakistan are opposed to the new world order being imposed by the U.S."

Ms. Bhutto's arch political foe, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who heads the main opposition Pakistan Muslim League, has also supported the MYC.

An official spokesman, quoted by The News daily, said the people had complete confidence in Ms. Bhutto's leadership.

Police formally identify body

LONDON (AFP) — Police said Friday they had formally identified a body found earlier in the day as that of missing French student Celine Figard.

Figard's naked body was discovered by a motorist in woods near a motorway rest area in western central England, 120 kilometres

from a gas station near Newbury, southern England, where she works as head waiter.

Figard had been on her way to spend Christmas with her brother when she disappeared.

The cause of death has not been released.

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PASSION FOR THE HOLIDAYS...

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Action vs rhetoric

FIVE LONG years have elapsed since the disastrous Gulf crisis and war divided the Arab World, eliminated Iraq as an important regional player and put the Iraqi people on a merciless track of agony and suffering. Many things have changed since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. But the suffering of the Iraqi people persists, with no signs of concern from their leadership or an effective mechanism for help from the other Arab countries.

Jordan has now stepped in to put an end to the empty rhetoric which has characterised the Arab response to the pleas of help emanating from Iraq by proposing a plan of action that can help lift the plight of the Iraqi people.

The plan may or may not work. But the fact that Jordan has articulated it means that someone is at least serious about the need to save Iraq and its people. Compared to the rhetoric others have made about Iraq, the Jordanian proposal is centred around a plan of action whose mechanism is clear, objectives noble. Jordan says that the only way to help the Iraqis and save their country from a bloodbath is to encourage them to get together to articulate a policy of national reconciliation. Jordan insists that the role of all outsiders, including itself, is restricted to facilitating a meeting and providing the participants with the help that they might need in order to get going. Above all, the Kingdom unequivocally states that the objective of the gathering should be to maintain the territorial integrity of the country, to create a pluralistic system under which the rights of all Iraqis can be respected and to rehabilitate Iraq to play its legitimate role as a member of the region and the international community.

No one who is genuinely concerned about the fate of Iraqis can object to such a proposal, for it embodies all the goals that the Iraqis and the Arabs, at least publicly, envisage for a post-Gulf war Iraq.

Against this backdrop, those who want to help the Iraqis should either support the Jordanian proposal or come up with a more workable and viable alternative. Otherwise, there will be one explanation for their objections: It is not the well-being of Iraq that they seek, it is the serving of their limited and personal interests which they want to achieve at the expense of Iraq and its people.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE FEELING of optimism which marked the atmosphere surrounding the Israeli-Syrian negotiations in Washington did not result from the death of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, nor did it come as a sudden inspiration of Syrian President Hafez Assad, said a writer in Al Ra'i daily. Most probably, this optimism came about in the light of progress achieved through negotiations going on behind the scenes and outside the framework of the public meetings between the two sides, according to Tareq Masarweh. It seems that Damascus and Tel Aviv are now in agreement on what has been described as "regional peace," which, among other things, provides for Israel's recognition of Syria's interests and privileges in Lebanon, said the writer. Therefore, one can conclude that Syria's earlier display of dissatisfaction with Jordan's attitude and its peace treaty with Israel or the Palestinians' conclusion of the Oslo deals with the Jewish state was tactical, and because they have not waited for Damascus to achieve its own peace with Tel Aviv, said the writer. There is no doubt now, added the writer, that with the achievement of a Syrian-Israeli peace, which is drawing closer everyday, Lebanon will be transformed into a "self-rule area."

FAKHRI KAWAR, a writer in Al Dustour, said the public is dissatisfied with the government's attitude vis-a-vis the coffee question. As an executive authority, the government has the power to end the monopoly of coffee merchants and bring down the excessive prices imposed by a handful of whole sale merchants on the Jordanian people by allowing other merchants to import the coffee, said the writer. He said it was not enough for the government departments not to serve coffee in their canteens, because this is a very limited action that does not have an effective result. The government can force the coffee merchants to lower the prices, and can at the same time help the Jordanian Consumer Protection Society's campaigns, he added. On the other hand, said the writer, supporting the society's endeavours is a national duty; and should this society succeed in bringing down the coffee prices, the road will be paved for it to serve the public through other campaigns in other matters of national interest.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Subsidies — a crime against the future

IT IS NOW taken for granted that financial subsidies make a bad policy which, sooner or later, leads to destruction. A subsidy would start as an irresponsible official yielding to pressure and making a decision. Subsidies grow like a snowball and finally expose the very security of the country to high risk. This is similar to a sick man buying time in order for the ailment to deteriorate beyond remedy. France and America gave very relevant examples.

France witnessed recently an extended strike which paralysed public life for several weeks. The reason is that at some time a socialist government decided to increase the entitlements and other claims against the welfare system and social security beyond the limits dictated by the proper economic formulas. The beneficiaries of such irresponsible action rejoiced and reelected the same government for a second term, because it allowed them to enjoy a standard of living exceeding their rights, causing huge losses to the welfare system in the process.

Finally came the moment of truth. The French welfare system is bankrupt. It is unable to meet its financial commitments and repay its huge debts guaranteed by the government. There is no alternative but to face the problem through a radical restructuring overhaul whereby outlays would be curtailed and subscription premiums increased so that a balance may be restored.

Predictably, the millions of beneficiaries rebelled. They only cared for their entitlements and their good life-styles and standards of living. They took to the streets to force the government to back up and to leave things as they are. What counts is that they should pay less, take more, live happily today and let France and its economy go to hell.

In the United States, government offices were shutdown

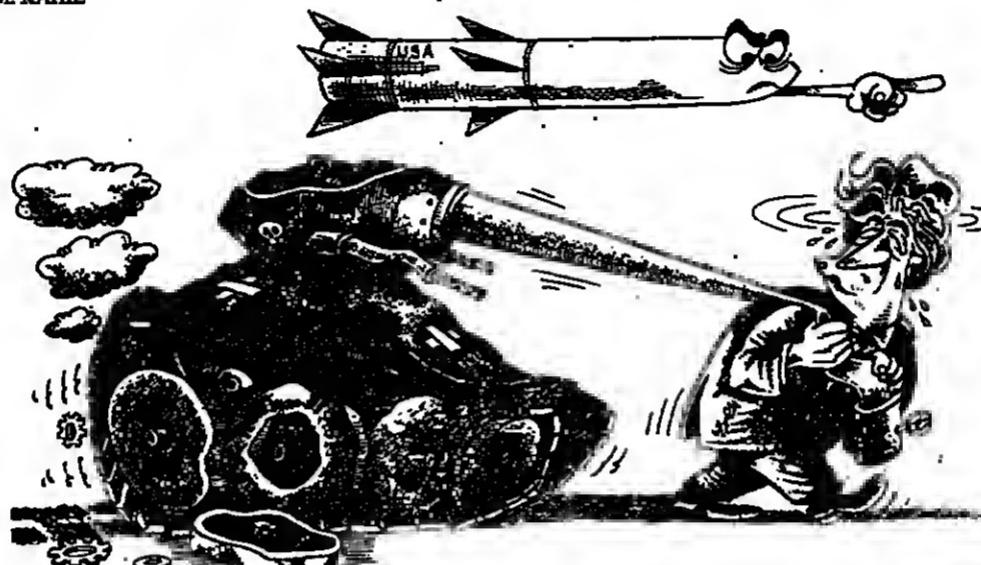
due to lack of funds, because the budget was not agreed upon between the Congress and the president. The Republican Congress insisted on introducing gradual reductions of social expenditure of the budget over seven years in order to balance the budget by 2002, otherwise the treasury will be bankrupt, the dollar will lose value, and prices will break the roof and rise to the sky. However, the Democratic president was not in a position to infuriate the millions of beneficiaries in an election year. Likewise, he cannot raise taxes to cover the deficit, so he revert to his presidential power of veto. Beneficiaries applauded. For them what counts is their entitlements. They want to live today and let America and its budget go to hell.

When a government makes a financial commitment and graciously undertake to subsidise some group or another, someone will have to pay for that. Officials don't pay from their own private funds. Anything they want to pay must be financed one way or another, by taxes, borrowing or begging for grants at the expense of the country's integrity and perhaps sovereignty.

Those in Jordan who call for subsidising water, electricity, bread and feed; demand raising salaries, retirement pensions and social security entitlements without mention of the means to finance them, gain popularity. They are adorned by the mob, but in reality they are stabbing the country in the back, sucking the blood of the homeland and risking its security and future.

Subsidies, and dealing with public funds recklessly pushed us to the crisis of foreign indebtedness. They effectively installed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a custodian for our economic policies. This came natural, because the inefficient planner needs a custodian to take care of him.

M. KAHL



A recipe to solve Iraq

By Dr. Jamal Sha'er

A LARGE majority of the Arab people are concerned about the suffering of the Iraqi people and other people too. Most likely those who see things without being affected by outside influences can see that national reconciliation of the Iraqi people has become a required demand.

It is only through this way that Iraqis can say to the world that they are one unified people. Only then can Iraqi expatriates return to their country without fear, and Arabs and neighbouring countries and the whole world would raise their voices demanding the opening of a new page of cooperation with Iraq.

There is no need to say that the main objective of this national reconciliation is the preservation of the unity of the Iraqi people on all of Iraq's territory and among the different sects. However, this objective could not materialise without following the only viable method (in dealing with the situation in Iraq).

If our King and leader took the initiative to issue a call for a conference that unites the Iraqis in Amman, every Jordanian has to exert all possible efforts to make this call successful instead of jumping into conclusions and predicting its failure in advance, as if some people are only concerned about shaking the confidence in our country and in ourselves. Above all, we are in no need of proving our legitimacy and our qualification to issue

this call. However, the question of who should be invited and who should we seek cooperation with remains. These are vital questions that will ensure success and will exclude any interference of a non-Arab country.

Those who meet should be the forces that have effective influence and are capable of achievement and action. First of these is the Iraqi leadership itself. I call for initiating contacts at the highest level with the Iraqi leadership to attend the conference or to designate others to participate. In addition, the spiritual leaders of Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites and other minorities should be invited as well as leaders and politicians known for their long experience and clean conduct and who represent all political, tribal and diplomatic shades as well as academics and human rights activists.

And since national reconciliation necessitates the opening of a new page, the door should be open to all contributions to rebuild Iraq and put its people on the path of progress. The

way to achieve this is to hold consultations at different levels to agree on the list of invitees from inside and the outside as well as to agree on the agenda and the objectives, their implementation and ways of ensuring commitment and follow up to the adopted recommendations.

Those who meet should be the forces that have effective influence and are capable of achievement and action. First of these is the Iraqi leadership itself. I call for initiating contacts at the highest level with the Iraqi leadership to attend the conference or to designate others to participate. In addition, the spiritual leaders of Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites and other minorities should be invited as well as leaders and politicians known for their long experience and clean conduct and who represent all political, tribal and diplomatic shades as well as academics and human rights activists.

Such an effort needs sufficient time for preparations to make it successful. It is an attempt in my opinion that has a big chance to succeed and if it does not it will not be the end of the world. We would have tried our best. We are qualified to do that and we will be compensated by God.

Al Ra'i.

Reform is far from dead, but the communist past is an obstacle



Most Russians chose not to take that risk, or ceased to care what the purpose of the system was as long as bread was cheap, jobs were plentiful, education was pretty good. The party, at least for now, has distanced itself from the most brazen practices of the past, includ-

Lower house rents are possible

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

HOUSE RENT and the rent law in Jordan were the subject of my article last week. Today I want to share with you some of what the father of modern economics, Adam Smith, said about the topic of house rent almost two hundred and twenty years ago.

The arguments of this greatest of all economists will no doubt shed new light on our present problem.

Adam Smith recognised that house rent was divided into two parts, the first was a building rent and the second was a ground rent.

"The building rent is the interest or profit of the capital expended in building the house. In order to put the trade of a builder upon the same level with other trades, it is necessary that this rent should be sufficient, first to pay him the same interest which he would have got for his capital if he had lent it upon good security, and, secondly, to keep the house in constant repair, or, what comes to the same thing, to replace, within a certain term of years, the capital which had been employed in building it. The building rent ... is, therefore, everywhere regulated by the ordinary interest of money." (The Wealth of Nations 1776)

As for the second part of the rent, the ground rent, the remainder of the rent received goes to rent the land. In other words, the rent received by the landlord should at least compensate him/her for whatever expenditure went to build the house and for the money he/she would have made if he had rented the land. How is the rent to be calculated? First, add up the value of the land (how much would you have sold it for) and the cost of the building which will lead you to an estimate of your fixed cost (F). Then estimate the amount of maintenance necessary to maintain the building in its original condition after a family rents it for one year (M). Second, multiply the F value by the market interest rate to obtain an estimate of forgone earnings from building the house.

The forgone earnings are calculated for the period of the rent contract. In other words, if you had bought a treasury note with the money spent on the building of the house then you would have made some revenue from the interest on this money (around 9.5 per cent in Jordan). So if the building cost was JD 100,000 your forgone earnings on the building alone is JD 9500. Add to this a maintenance cost which depends on the size and age and education level of prospective occupants. Let's assume your estimate of the maintenance cost for a prospective tenant be JD 500. Your total building rent is JD 100,000 for the coming year, not inclusive of the land rent.

Let the value of the land that the house was built on be also JD 100,000. The forgone earnings for a year on the land alone will be the earnings forgone from having sold the land and

ing one-party politics, censorship and repression of dissent.

The reporting and the polling data from Russia show that the Communists gained from discontent about an uneven economy and upheaval in Russian life. Voters in Moscow, St. Petersburg and some other urban centres, where the benefits of reform have materialised most quickly, voted for reform candidates. Nearly everywhere else, Communists and nationalists did well, singing from the same page of promises about restoring order and economic stability, shorthand for the Communist safety net.

Reform in Russia is far from dead, but it has run into an formidable obstacle — the past. To prevail in the months and years ahead, the reformers will have to convince millions of their countrymen that the uncertainty of freedom is preferable to the security of communism, as deadening as it was.

The New York Times

Salvage project in Southern Ghors highlights scale, persistence of tomb robbing tradition

By Rami G. Khouri

*Special to
the Jordan Times*

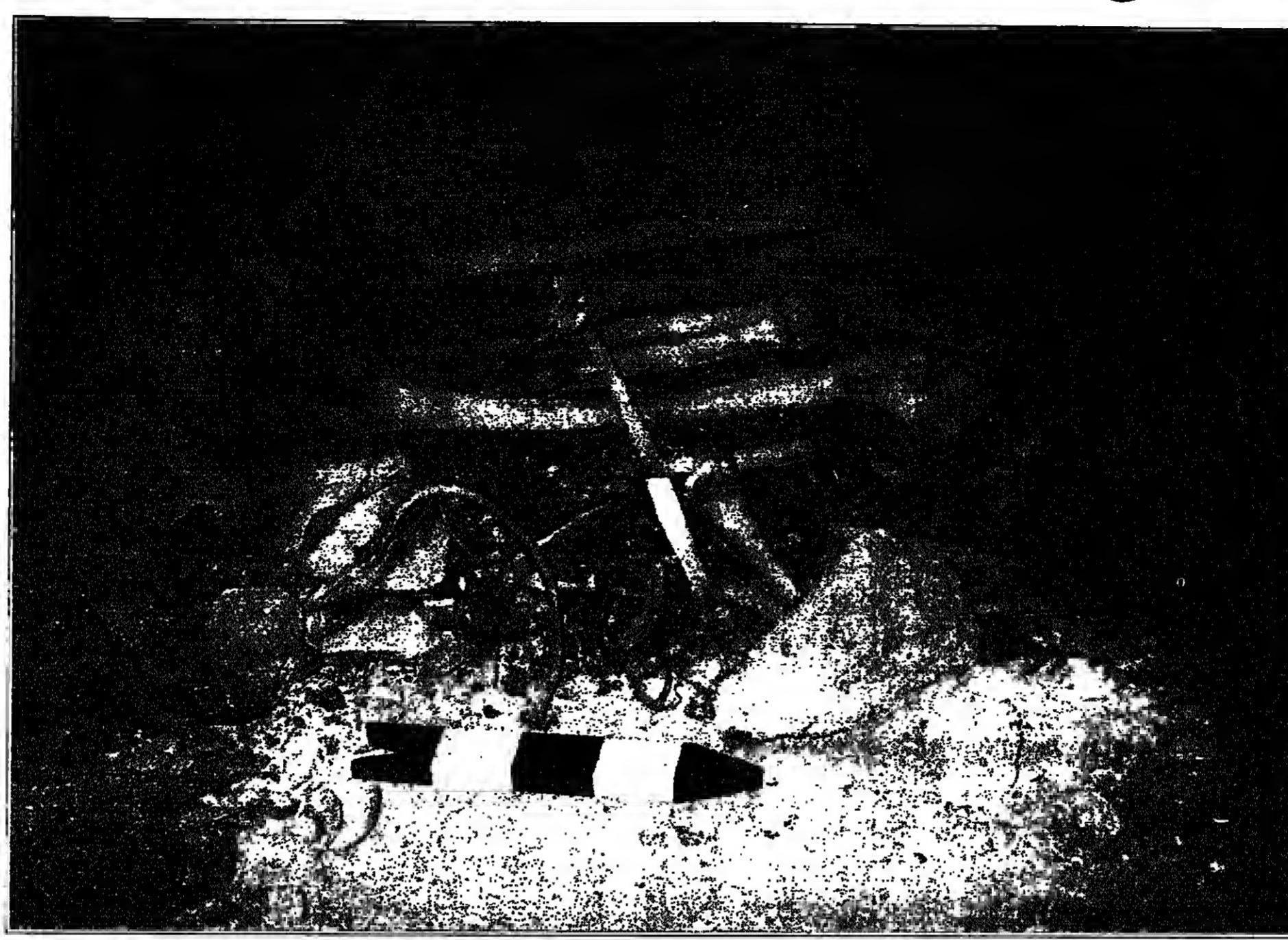
The vexing problem of how to protect Jordanian antiquities sites from the plundering of tomb robbers and their expanding network of clients in Jordan has been dramatised again by recent events at the henge Early Bronze Age cemetery at Bab ed-Dhra, along the south-east coast of the Dead Sea. A recent spree of grave robbing in an area that was not previously known to house a cemetery prompted American archaeologist David McCreevy and the Jordanian Department of Antiquities to mount a brief salvage excavation that has added some new information to our knowledge of the culture of the people who inhabited that area five thousand years ago, and our knowledge of the market for stolen antiquities in Amman.

What is so shocking about the theft of tomb goods, mainly pottery, at Bab ed-Dhra's is not only the extent of the looting (hundreds of tombs at a time in some cases) or its long time scale (the problem has been known since the site was first explored in 1924); it is also that the pace of tomb robbing has increased in the Southern Ghors region in recent years, and that stolen antiquities from Early Bronze Age cemeteries are now routinely and openly sold in reputable retail shops in Amman.

The four-day Bab ed-Dhra Salvage Operation in November aimed to map the site, determine its relationship to other known Early Bronze (EB) Age cemeteries in the immediate area, and collect representative pottery, bone samples and any other material goods from tombs that had been illicitly opened and pilfered. Dr McCreevy, a professor of religion and archaeology at Willamette University (Oregon, USA) who spent the last half year in Jordan as a Fulbright Scholar, excavated at Bab ed-Dhra in the 1970s and is well versed in Early Bronze Age issues.

His efforts this year identified 39 new EBIA shaft tombs that had been opened by the robbers. Shaft tombs typically comprise a vertical central shaft dug into the ground, from which separate burial chambers radiate horizontally. Tombs could have up to five separate burial chambers connected to a single shaft, though two or three chambers was most typical. The average size of the shafts was about one metre in diameter and two metres in depth. The average oval-shaped burial chamber was 1.5 metres long, 1.7 metres wide and 85 centimetres high.

This thesis is being challenged by some archaeologists who believe that EBIA cultures probably included permanent villages and settlements that we have not identified — either because scholars today have not searched for them suffi-



A typical burial of disarticulated skeletons in an Early Bronze Age tomb at Bab ed-Dhra' (Photo by D. McCreevy)

ciently vigorously, or because the nature of the settlements (tent, or straw dwellings, or low mounds of tumulus mudbrick bones) makes them inherently difficult or impossible to identify. Dr McCreevy reports that recent bulldozing activity has exposed some mudbrick walls west of Bab ed-Dhra' that probably date from the EBIA period — perhaps from one of the elusive EBIA settlements that may have existed contemporaneously with the early cemetery?

The main reason why EBIA peoples are assumed to have been nomadic is that their burials are almost all secondary burials of disarticulated skeletons — piles of bones that are no longer in a complete skeleton but rather are piled up in a mass of bones, with the skulls neatly lined up next to the body bones. It is assumed that nomadic people on the move buried their dead in temporary cairns (stone piles) that allowed the body to decompose until only the skeleton was left; the bones were then carried in a bag for re-burial in their final resting place in the Bab ed-Dhra cemetery.

Dr McCreevy suggests that we may have to revise our commonly accepted interpretations of EBIA culture in southern Jordan in light of the information being gleaned from Bab ed-

Dhra' and other sites. The predominance of disarticulated skeletons in the EBIA tombs is not necessarily an indicator of nomadic cultures, he says, because disarticulated skeletons were also common in the "charnel houses" that EBII-II townspeople used to bury their dead. It is possible that the cairns used for burials around the country were only temporary decantation chambers where the dead body was placed in order for the flesh and organs to decompose, and in antiquity were not intended to be permanent burial sites.

Disarticulated secondary burials are also practised today by villagers as well as nomads. Dr McCreevy believes that we should also take into consideration the possibility that EB cultures had a different view of death than we do today. Perhaps the EB people saw death as merely another act in a person's life, and thought that the dead person departed on a voyage to another world while his or her body was decomposing — with the tail decomposition of the body marking the end of the voyage, at which point the bones could be collected and permanently placed in the ancestral burial ground.

He also points out another factor that argues for a settled rather than a nomadic population in the

EII period: the very intensive exploitation of the burial ground. The tomb chambers were often dug so close together that they opened into one another, creating a kind of honeycomb effect. This suggests that the people who dug the graves knew exactly where the adjacent chambers were located. This argues well for resident tomb cutters who lived permanently in the area and specialised in this activity, rather than itinerant nomads who passed through once or twice a year and cut new graves as needed.

All the skeletons found were disarticulated, except for one fully articulated adult skeleton against the back wall of one chamber.

Most bone piles were found in the centre of the chambers, with skulls laid to the left of the entrance and the bone piles and pottery grave goods around the right side. Most chambers had several burials, both adults and younger people, with three to five skulls commonly found in each chamber.

The bone piles were placed on reed mats, most of which had disintegrated into a powdery form, though in several cases water seepage had formed clear impressions of the reed weaving patterns on the floor. McCreevy's team also found uncarbonized wood fragments in two different

chambers. The most common wood items were staffs measuring some 3 cm in diameter (probably used as walking sticks), but included the remains of a wooden bowl.

An unusual find was a kind of flat wooden "pallet" or "board", of which four were identified. They measured around half a metre long, 2-6 centimetres thick, and some 20 centimetres wide, with one rough and one smooth side and a slightly bowed overall shape. They look like miniature threshing sleds, and originally had several holes in them. The purpose of these wooden boards remains a mystery.

Pottery recovered from the looted tombs included 54 whole and seven partial objects, with evidence that the robbers only were interested in whole objects in perfect condition. A bowl with a few missing rim chips was left behind, presumably because the robbers — or their patrons — thought it was too damaged to sell. The most common pottery shapes were large and medium V-shaped bowls, followed by medium jars, small bowls, and jugs. The pottery seems to closely resemble the early to middle EBIA pottery previously excavated in tombs in Cemetery A.

Dr McCreevy concludes from the brief salvage sea-

son that the area under question is an extension of a larger known ancient cemetery and not a new, distinct cemetery; and that several hundred or even several thousand unexcavated tombs remain to be examined in the area.

How to protect our heritage?

This raises important and ever more urgent questions about what can or should be done to Jordan to identify unexplored ancient cemeteries and protect them from illicit tomb robbers.

"The recent explosion of tomb robbing activity at Bab ed-Dhra', Safi and Feisheh, coupled with the ambitious development plans for this region in the post-peace era, presents a compelling argument for intensified efforts to protect the antiquities of the Southern Ghors and to conduct further scientific investigations before more data is lost," Dr McCreevy told the Jordan Times in a recent interview in Amman.

The looted theft of Jordanian antiquities and our cultural heritage, symbolised by the sale in Amman of EB pottery from Bab ed-Dhra' and other Southern Ghors sites, reconfirms yet again the urgent need to seek a solution to the problem of tomb robbing and illegal excavations. It is now becoming

King expresses hope

(Continued from page 1)

be put forth. The whole matter is up to the Iraqis themselves to decide their future and the most ideal formula for their own interrelationship."

The King noted that the partition of Iraq seems to be a de facto situation at present. "Even the presidential referendum which took place recently excluded parts of Iraq — the north and the south — because Iraq is practically partitioned."

"We draw the attention of the Arabs and the Iraqis to their situation and call for prompt action to avoid a deterioration of the situation. We are performing our duty towards Iraq, a country whose future is unknown as far as I can see at this stage and in the light of what this country

is bound to offer in compensation to different countries of the world."

"Why do we favour confederation as a future Jordanian-Palestinian option for example and refuse to discuss a federation for Iraq knowing that a confederation is more loose than a federation, and why do we forget that Germany and the United States are federations," he asked.

He said that some people have seen only the negative side of the issue. "What we want is to bolster relations among the Iraqis," the King said.

He expressed hope that there would not be any more confusion as that which occurred in the past about this subject. "The whole issue is for the Iraqis them-

selves and Jordan has nothing to do with it. The subject does not revolve around a Jordanian-Iraqi federation or confederation at all."

"Whoever examines the UN Security Council resolutions will find that they are not based on removing the mass destruction weapons alone but they talk about human rights, the north and the south and other issues."

Given the fact that we have not succeeded so far in making any progress on the road of removing the agony of the Iraqis, it means we regrettably failed to date to reach a result through dialogue with our brothers in Iraq at the leadership level."

Referring to the proposal of Jordan hosting a conference for the Iraqi opposition

groups, the King said: "There is no talk about any date or any opposition. But these groups had met in other Arab capitals and continue to do so. In fact our talk stemmed from the pain and the fear over Iraq, its present and future should the Iraqis fail to agree on their fate and on tackling their problem."

On normalization of relations between Israel and Jordan the King said: "So far the relations are good and the two sides ratified all their agreements stipulated in the peace treaty. But as to the positive result in the wider sense I believe we need some more time because the process requires more time."

Asked if there was any intention of a government reshuffle in Jordan the King said: "There are no plans for that before passing the budget (through Parliament); afterwards we will see how matters develop."

In reply to a question about which stage is more

Violence in S. Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

dangerous: dealing with war or peace the King said: "From an Arab point of view I believe that the war option was the one that drove us to the present situation. (War) based on sentiments devoid of reason resulted in a record of tragedies that befall the nation."

"Peace opens the opportunity for this people... We are in a race against time to enable the Arab citizens to achieve what others had achieved ahead of them."

Asked if there was any intention of a government reshuffle in Jordan the King said: "There are no plans for that before passing the budget (through Parliament); afterwards we will see how matters develop."

The warnings contrasted with the upbeat assessments of the peace talks.

Israeli Housing Minister

Binyamin Ben Eliezer said: "for the first time the negotiations began to address fundamental issues."

And chief Syrian negotiator Walid Mualem told AFP by telephone from the United States that "the climate was not tense and the atmosphere was comfortable and different" from that of previous rounds and the talks were "useful."

The United States said it was "very encouraged" by the peace talks and expressed confidence that the new rocket attacks on Israel would not slow the process.

Israel and Syrian negotiators, who met for three days this week, unexpectedly stayed on in Washington rather than return to their capitals ahead of a new round of discussions next week.

A U.S. official, who asked not to be named, said that

talks aimed at ending a decades-old state of war were continuing over the weekend "on an informal basis" at undisclosed venues in the Washington area.

No word has filtered out on the substance of the discussions that opened Wednesday at a former plantation outside of the U.S. capital under a strict news blackout.

But Brian Cullin, a White House spokesman, said Saturday: "We were very encouraged by the progress of the talks this week."

The talks on the eastern shore of the state of Maryland were originally scheduled to adjourn before resuming on Wednesday. But negotiators decided instead to remain here to prepare for the next round.

"This is an indication that the talks were constructive," an administration official said.

Rifai: Investments in new projects total JD 276m

By Khattab Salman
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Investments in new projects in Jordan totalled JD 276 million (\$394.3 million) in 1995, according to the Investment Promotion Corporation (IPC).

IPC Director-General Taleb Rifai told the Jordan Times that 118 projects enjoyed the exemptions provided by the investment promotion law this year.

"Total investment in these projects was JD 276 million, JD 95 million (\$135.7 million) of which were loans from bank," Dr. Rifai said.

He noted that the total number of job opportunities provided by these projects was 7,637 which would help in easing the high employment rate in Jordan.

Official figures put the unemployment rate in Jordan between 15 and 18 per cent.

Dr. Rifai pointed out that a total of 7,572 new companies were registered at the Ministry of Industry and Trade in 1995.

Of the total number, 7,306 were Jordanian, 222 were Arab, and 44 were foreign.

"The total capital of these

companies was JD 341 million (\$487.1 million) with new Jordanian companies accounting for JD 303 million (\$432.9 million), Arab companies JD 31 million (\$4.3 million), and foreign companies JD 7 million (\$10 million)," Dr. Rifai added.

Jordan had introduced an investment encouraging package for foreign investors before the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit that was held in Amman last October, in order to improve investment climate in Jordan. The package provided freedom of capital movement and equal treatment of foreign investors as their Jordanian counterparts.

The government also enacted a law last week that eliminated curbs on foreigners buying on the stock market in Jordan.

"Records at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) show that investments in 1995 reached JD 417 million (\$595.7 million)," Dr. Rifai noted. Foreigners own 32 percent of the AFM's capitalised stock which amounts to \$4.4 billion in total.

Russia stays firm on economic reforms but aims to help poor

MOSCOW (R) — A senior minister, giving an upbeat assessment of Russia's economy, said Saturday that reforms would stay on course in 1996, but the government would do more to help those hurt by the painful transformation.

First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets said the government would turn its attention more to the social sphere — suggesting it would take account of the communists' success in this month's parliamentary election.

"We plan to keep a general tough anti-inflationary line in financial policy, while trying to find ways to resolve the problems of the social sphere and domestic producers," ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Mr. Soskovets as telling Russian reporters.

Interfax news agency said this would mean protecting some domestic producers against foreign competition and increasing social spending.

"The government's tough financial-budgetary course is necessitated by market re-

forms, and practically all parties acknowledge there is no alternative to them," Interfax quoted Mr. Soskovets as saying.

But it said he added: "Some corrections will certainly be made strengthening the social direction of the government's economic policy."

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and President Boris Yeltsin have said economic reforms will stay on the same course, despite the Communist Party's big gains in this month's election to the State Duma lower house of parliament.

But pressure to slow reforms has grown because the communists based their success on widespread discontent with the hardships endured under this government.

Mr. Yeltsin called Thursday for an improvement in the work of the economy ministry and said "saboteurs" should be rooted out.

But Mr. Soskovets said the overall economic perfor-

Iraq signs deal to supply oil to Jordan in 1996

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq agreed Saturday to supply oil to Jordan in 1996 and said the signing of the deal had not been affected by Amman giving refuge earlier this year to prominent Iraqi defectors.

"We have agreed on quantities, their prices and financial conditions," said Iraqi Oil Minister Amir Mohammad Rasheed at the signing ceremony in Baghdad.

"The quantity of crude oil is 3.2 million tonnes a year and regarding oil products approximately 1.2 million tonnes," the minister told Reuters.

The agreement represents the annual renewal of a deal first struck during the 1990-91 Gulf crisis when Saudi Arabia stopped supplying Jordan with oil to punish Amman for its pro-Iraqi stance.

Mr. Rasheed said negotiations on the deal were not hampered by the cooling off in relations between Amman and Baghdad following the detection in August to Jordan of two sons-in-law of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein along with their families.

"In our contacts... there is

absolutely none of this coolness reflected in any way," he said. "Contrary to this, it was done in an atmosphere of brotherhood and between brotherly countries. This was how we felt it, experienced it and implemented it."

According to the Iraqi news agency INA, the agreement was signed for Jordan by Energy Ministry Secretary General Ahmad Mohammad Al Bashir and for Iraq by Taha Humud Musa, senior under-secretary at the Iraqi oil ministry.

Iraq will send the oil by truck across the border as there is no pipeline linking the two countries.

Iraq and Jordan have agreed in principle to construct a pipeline but the project has gone no further than initial feasibility studies.

"It (the project) is not something that we expect (to happen) next year," Mr. Rasheed said.

Bahrain reports rise in national workers

MANAMA (AFP) — Bahrain reported an increase in the number of nationals taking up jobs in the private sector as part of the Gulf island's drive to lessen reliance on expatriate labour. During the first 11 months of this year, 7,251 Bahrainis found jobs with the help of the labour affairs ministry while a large number of other nationals were employed in private institutions independently.

"The share of Bahraini employees in the private sector during the first 11 months of this current year reached 29.3 per cent, which is close to the target of 30 per cent set by the ministry for 1995 while it was 27.1 per cent at the end of 1994," Labour Affairs Minister Abdul Nabi Al Shaihi said.

The statement comes as the United States has been

House panel wants early wage increases, more aid to poor and job creation schemes

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Financial Committee of the Lower House of Parliament insisted that the increase of JD 10 to salaries of civil servants should be effective as of the beginning of January and not the month of May as the government planned.

The committee, which has been discussing the 1996 draft budget and presented it to House Speaker Sa'ad Hayel Srour in preparation for its discussion by the House next Tuesday, stressed that the continuous rise in prices has weakened the purchasing power of Jordanian families and called on the

government to adopt the appropriate means to put an end to price hikes.

While it considered the government's subsidies to some of the commodities as a burden on the state's budget, especially that the prices have risen internationally, it insisted on the importance of providing support for poor families and reconsidering the food coupons system that has been largely criticised recently. It also proposed that the government reduce the price of bread and give financial and direct support to poor families.

However, the committee rejected what the government said was a 2.3 per cent rise in prices in 1995 and insisted that prices had increased by a larger percentage.

The committee also insisted that foreign labour should be strictly monitored and that support for the Armed Forces should continue.

Under the chairmanship of Hashem Dabbas, the committee has held several meetings in discussing the draft budget over the past two weeks. Before drafting its final recommendations, the committee consulted with Finance Minister Basel Jaradeh, the general director of the General Budget Department and the ministers of industry and trade, labour, public works, planning, health, water and irrigation and several directors and economy experts.

Iran, Russia to boost long-term cooperation

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran and Russia have agreed to boost long-term economic and technical cooperation at the end of a three-day visit by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Davydov, a joint statement said Friday.

Iranian and Russian sources said they would cooperate over the next 10 years, after Mr. Davydov, who led a high-ranking political and economic delegation, held talks with a series of Iranian leaders.

"The two countries decided to enter into long-term cooperation on the basis of mutual interests and independence of other countries," the official agency IRNA said.

A Russian official said: "This cooperation concerns different projects in the military, nuclear, oil, energy and banking fields."

A document on long-term bilateral economic cooperation will be put to Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and his Russian counterpart Boris Yeltsin to be signed, IRNA added.

The statement comes as the United States has been

trying to persuade other countries to join its economic boycott of Iran, which it accuses of supporting international terrorism, charges strongly denied by Tehran.

Mr. Davydov, who is responsible for economic relations, vowed Thursday to defend Russia "strategic" relationships with Iran against pressure from third countries.

"Russia accords great importance to its strategic relations with Iran and it will not allow any country to interfere," Mr. Davydov said, quoted by Tehran radio, in an apparent reference to U.S. demands on Moscow to end its military and nuclear cooperation with Tehran.

Russian aid for developing the Bushehr nuclear plant in southern Iran as well as building other plants in the

Iranian sources said the visit had helped "to define the framework of our cooperation for the next 10 years" with Moscow.

Mr. Davydov signed a banking accord with Iranian Economy Minister Morteza Mohammad Khan on "reciprocal financial commit-

ments," IRNA said.

The talks had also focused on "ways of repaying" the Iranian debt to Russia estimated at more than \$400 million, Russian sources said.

Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Rafsanjani could meet "in the coming months, perhaps in a third country in central Asia," Russian sources said.

The two countries have also adopted a similar stand on the Caspian Sea which they want to be accorded a special status.

Mr. Davydov said Thursday: "Outside interference is unacceptable. The resources of the Caspian Sea only belong to the countries bordering it," again in an apparent reference to U.S. involvement in an oil consortium exploring three Azerbaijani fields in the sea.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Home affairs may be a little difficult during the daytime today, but the evening is fine from the romantic standpoint for you and your mate.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 20) Do nothing which can cause an outsider difficulty today, and then you can enjoy pleasure with your close friends and associates.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Early this morning cut down on unnecessary expenditures, and later this evening you can handle duties which interest you.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You feel that you are not having the pleasures in life which should be yours, but by tonight all this will change for you and for the better.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Secret matters do not work as well as you wish at this time, persevere and they improve. Get you home in better order for there to be harmony.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Your friends may not be in a position to agree with your wishes during the daytime today, so be philosophical about it.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Don't try to influence a higher-up who may not be in the mood for such antics. Tonight you get good ideas which will help your future.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Pigeon-hole new ideas for the time being, and later tonight you can show your finest talents. Be with close friends and have fun with them.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Try to keep some promise you have made at this time even though it may seem boring to you now and is not prosperous to your abilities.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Don't keep needing a fellow associate during the daytime today and later in the evening, you can be with clever friends who can be helpful.

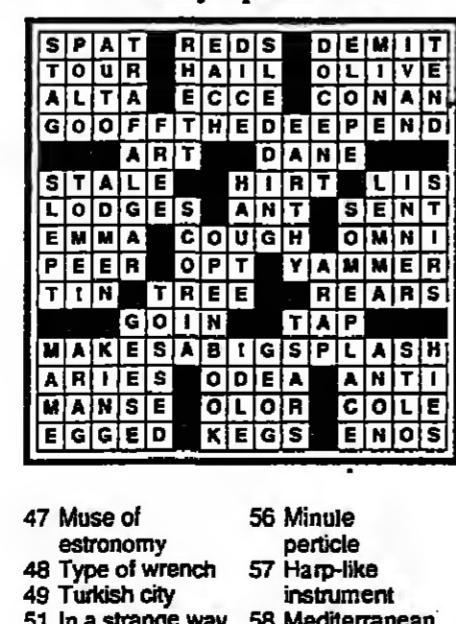
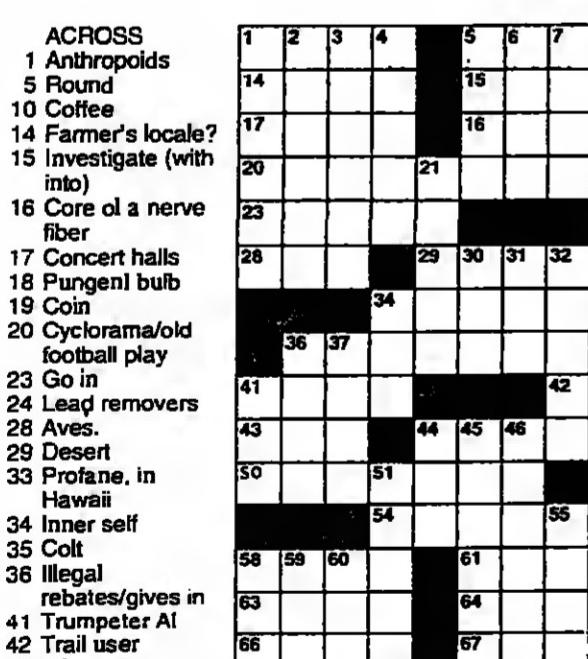
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can get many career activities completed at home today and please your family in the evening. A helper can be very cooperative.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is a good day today to get the wrinkles out of your creative talents during the daytime, but go to some new site later in the evening. Make new friends.

Birthstone of December: Turquoise — Zircon

THE Daily Crossword

by Lee G. Barrow



Peanuts



Andy Capp

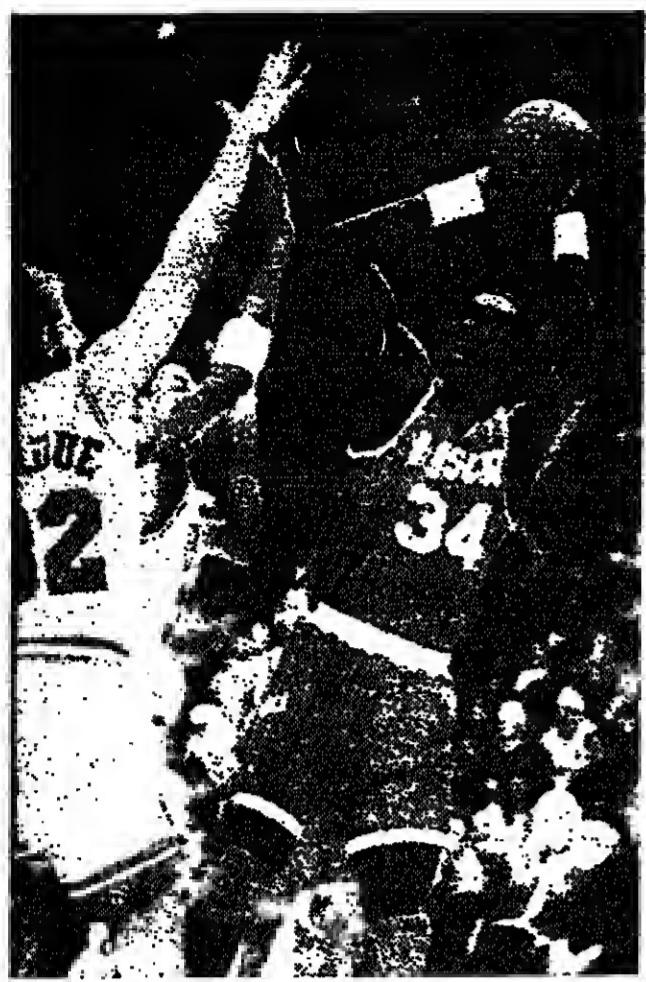


Mutt'n'Jeff



A final look back at sports champions in 1995

By The Associated Press



NBA MVP Hakeem Olajuwon won their 2nd consecutive title

34 led the Houston Rockets

BASKETBALL**International**

European Championship — Yugoslavia
European Champions Club Cup — Real Madrid, Spain
European player of the year — Arvidas Sabonis, Real Madrid
European coach of the year — Zelimir Obradovic, Real Madrid
McDonald's Championship — Houston Rockets

Professional

United States (NBA) — Houston Rockets
Australia — North Melbourne Giants
France — Olympique d'Antibes
Germany — Bayer Leverkusen
Greece — Olympiakos Piraeus
Italy — Buckler Bologna
Spain — FC Barcelona

BOXING**WBA**

Heavyweight — Bruce Seldon
Cruiserweight — Nate Miller
Light Heavyweight — Virgil Hill
Super Middleweight — Frank Liles
Middleweight — Jorge Castro

WBC

Heavyweight — Frank Bruno
Cruiserweight — Anacet Wamba
Light Heavyweight — Fabrice Tiozzo
Super Middleweight — Nigel Benn
Middleweight — Quincy Taylor

IBF

Heavyweight — Frans Botha
Cruiserweight — Alfred Cole
Light Heavyweight — Henry Maske
Super Middleweight — Roy Jones Jr.
Middleweight — Bernard Hopkins
Junior Middleweight — Terry Norris
Welterweight — Felix Trinidad

SOCER

Nations
Women's world champion — Norway
FIFA world youth championship (under-20) — Argentina
FIFA world under-17 championship — Ghana
Copa America — Uruguay
Intercontinental Cup — Denmark
Afro-Asian Cup — Nigeria
Caribbean Cup — Trinidad and Tobago
Central American Nations Cup — Honduras
Southeast Asian Games — Thailand

International Clubs
Toyota (Intercontinental) Cup — Ajax Amsterdam (Netherlands)
European Champions Cup — Ajax Amsterdam (Netherlands)

European Cup Winners Cup — Real Zaragoza (Spain)
Five-time Tour de France winner Miguel Indurain

Austrian Cup — Rapid Vienna
Belarus League — Dinamo Minsk
Bulgarian League — Levski Sofia
Bulgarian Cup — Lokomotiv Sofia
Croatian League — Hajduk Split
Cyprus League — Anorthosos Famagusta
Cyprus Cup — Apoel Nicosia
Czech League — Sparta Prague
Czech Cup — Spartak Hradec Kralove
Danish League — Aalborg
Danish Cup — FC Copenhagen
Finland League — Haka
Finland Cup — HJK Helsinki
Greece League — Panathinaikos
Greece Cup — AEK Athens
Hungarian League — Ferencvaros
Hungarian Cup — VAC Samsung
Iceland League — IA Akranes
Iceland Cup — KR Reykjavik
Irish League — Dundalk
Irish Cup — Derry City
Israel League — Maccabi Tel Aviv
Israeli Cup — Maccabi Haifa
Latvian League — skonto Riga
Lithuanian League — Inkaras
Lithuanian Cup — Zalgiris Vilnius
Luxembourg League — Jeunesse Esch
Luxembourg Cup — Grevenmacher
Macedonia League — Varadar Skopje
Macedonian Cup — Silkes Malta League — Hibernian
Malta Cup — Valletta
Moldovan League — Zimbru
Moldovan Cup — Tiligul Northern Ireland League
Crusaders
Northern Ireland Cup — Linfield
Norway League — Rosenborg
Norway Cup — Molde

UEFA Cup — Parma (Italy)
European Super Cup — AC Milan (Italy)
Copa Libertadores (South American Championship) — Gremio (Brazil)
South American Super Cup — Independiente (Argentina)
CONCACAF Champions Cup — Saprissa (Costa Rica)
African Champions Cup — Orlando Pirates (South Africa)
African Cup Winners Cup — JS Kabylie (Algeria)
CAF Cup — ES Sahel (Tunisia)
Asian Champions Cup (1994) — Thai Farmer's Bank (Thailand)
Asian Cup Winners Cup — Bellmare (Japan)

European Clubs

English League & Blackburn Rovers
English Football Association Cup — Everton
English League Cup — Liverpool
German Bundesliga — Borussia Dortmund
German Cup — Borussia Moenchengladbach
Italian League — Juventus of Turin
Italian Cup — Juventus
Spanish League — Real Madrid
Spanish Cup — Deportivo de La Coruna
French League — Nantes
French Cup — Paris St. Germain
Netherlands League — Ajax Amsterdam
Netherlands Cup — Feyenoord of Rotterdam
Belgian League — Anderlecht
Belgian Cup — Club Brugge
Portuguese League — FC Porto
Portuguese Cup — Sporting Lisbon
Scottish League — Glasgow Rangers
Scottish Football Association Cup — Glasgow Celtic
Albanian League — FK Tirana
Albanian Cup — Teuta Durres
Armenian League — Chirak Armenian Cup — Ararat Yerevan
Austrian League — Casino Salzburg

Polish League — Legia Warsaw
Polish Cup — GKS Katowice
Romanian League — Steaua Bucharest
Romanian Cup — Petrolul Ploiesti
Russian League — Spartak Vladikavkaz
Russian Cup — Moscow Dynamo
Slovakia League — Slovan Bratislava
Slovenia Cup — Inter Bratislava
Slovenia League — Olympia Slovenia Cup — Mura Sobota
Swedish League — IFK Goteborg
Swedish Cup — Halmstad
Switzerland League — Grasshoppers
Switzerland Cup — Sion
Turkish League — Besiktas

Wimbledon
Men — Pete Sampras, United States
Women — Steffi Graf, Germany

Men doubles — Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde, Australia
Women doubles — Jana Novotna, Czech Republic and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Spain

Mixed doubles — Martina Navratilova and Jonathan Stark, United States

U.S. Open
Men — Pete Sampras, United States

Women — Steffi Graf, Germany

Men doubles — Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde, Australia

Women doubles — Gigi Fernandez, United States, and Natasha Zvereva, Belarus

Mixed doubles — Merritt McGrath and Matt Luceas

ATP Tour
Newsweek Champions Cup — Pete Sampras

Lipton Championships — Andre Agassi

Monte Carlo Open — Thomas Muster

German Open — Andrei Medvedev

Italian Open — Muster

World Team Cup — Sweden

Dunauier Ltd. Open — Agassi

Tbirdway ATP championships — Agassi

Open de la ville de Paris — Sampras

Turkish Cup — Trabzonspor

Ukrainian League — Dynamo Kiev

Welsh League — Bangor City

Welsh Cup — Wrexham

Yugoslavian League — Red Star Belgrade

Yugoslavian Cup — Obilic

South American Clubs

Argentine League — San Lorenzo-Velez Sarsfield

Brazilian National Championship — Botafogo

Bolivian League — San Jose

Chilean League — Universidad de Chile

Colombian League — Junior

Ecuadorian League — Barcelona

Paraguayan League — Olimpia

Pervian League — Sporting Cristal

Uruguayan League — Penarol

Venezuelan League — Caracas FC

Asian Clubs

Japan — Yokohama Marinos

CONCACAF Clubs

Mexico — Necaxa

United States (A League) — Seattle Sounders

TENNIS

Australian Open

Men — Andre Agassi, United States

Women — Mary Pierce, France

Men doubles — Jared Palmer and Ritchie Reneberg, United States

Women double — Jana Novotna, Czech Republic, and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Spain

Mixed doubles — Natasha Zvereva, Belarus, and Rick Leach, United States

French Open

Men — Thomas Muster, Austria

Women — Steffi Graf, Germany

Men doubles — Jacco Eltingh and Paul Haarhuis, Netherlands

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Knicks lose; Sonics hammer Celtics 124-85

LANDOVER (R) — The Washington Bullets broke a 15-game losing streak against the New York Knicks Friday, 127-120 in overtime, but had a bad start when star forward Chris Webber reinjured his left shoulder.

New York, playing without centre Patrick Ewing, never led until overtime, but Gheorghe Muresan's two free throws with 1:05 left in the extra session snapped a tie and Robert Pack hit 9-of-10 free throws in the final 40 seconds as the Bullets beat the Knicks for the first time since November 13, 1992.

It was just the second win in Washington's last 23 games against the Knicks.

Juan Howard scored 27 points and pack added 25 points for Washington, which lost Webber to a strained left shoulder with 3:53 remaining in OT. Webber had 19 points and seven assists.

Webber drove the lane and lowered his shoulder into New York forward Charles Oakley who fell to the floor. Oakley swiped at the ball and Webber fell awkwardly, staying on the floor for four or five minutes as scary visions of season-ending surgery flashed through the Bullets' minds.

"It's not a dislocation," general manager John Nash said. "It's the same shoulder, but I repeat, it is not a dislocation. He aggravated it when he fell on it."

The news is better than we first expected. The soreness will dictate what will happen, that is the key. The good news is that we get him back in the near future."

"It couldn't have been a lot worse," Bullets coach Jim Lynam said. "They're saying it's a strain. It wasn't as serious as I first thought. When he didn't get up, I thought it was separated again."

Anthony Mason scored a season-high 30 points and Derek Harper added 21 for New York, which came back from a 16-point deficit in the final 11:27 of the fourth quarter.

Ewing sprained an ankle in the Knicks' loss to Cleveland



Dino Radja (40) of the Boston Celtics tries to shoot over the defense of Clifford Robinson (3) and Chris Duhon (right) of the Portland Trail Blazers during the first half of their NBA game earlier this week (Reuters photo)

Thursday, New York has dropped three of its last four games.

In Chicago, Michael Jordan scored 29 points and Scottie Pippen added 23 and eight assists as the Bulls avenged Tuesday's loss with a 123-93 victory over the Indiana Pacers.

Indiana snapped Chicago's 13-game winning streak Tuesday.

"We came out and defended our home court tonight," Jordan said. "I certainly had the idea tonight that I was going for the basket early. I wanted to set a good tone for the team. But ultimately it was our defense that won the game."

In Seattle Gary Payton scored 20 of his 26 points in the first half as the SuperSonics shelled the Boston Celtics 124-85, their worst loss in nearly 30 years.

Seattle has won four straight and 13 of its last 16. The Sonics have won eight straight at home, where they are 13-1.

The Celtics have lost five of their last six.

Shawn Kemp scored 24 points and Hersey Hawkins added 20 for Seattle. Rick Fox's 14 points led the Celtics, who shot 33 per cent (30-of-90) from the field.

In Charlotte, Kendall Gill had 16 points, 10 assists, nine

rebounds and blocked James Robinson's potential game-winning three-pointer at the buzzer as the Hornets handed the Portland Trail Blazers their sixth straight road loss, 102-99.

Scott Burrell scored 20 points and Glen Rice added 18 for the Hornets. Clifford Robinson had 26 points and Arvydas Sabonis 21 for Portland.

In Atlanta, Latrell Sprewell scored a season-high 32 points and rookie Joe Smith added 22 as the Golden State Warriors snapped a two-game losing streak with a 117-96 victory over the Hawks.

B.J. Armstrong scored 10 of his 21 points in the final period for the Warriors.

In Orlando, Shaquille O'Neal had 25 points and 10 rebounds as the Magic routed the Los Angeles Clippers 122-98 for their 23rd straight home victory.

Jerry Stackhouse scored 22 points and Clarence Weatherspoon 21 for Philadelphia.

The Nuggets have lost six straight on the road.

In Sacramento, Mitch Richmond scored 20 points and Walt Williams 18 as the Kings ripped the Philadelphia 76ers 117-97.

The Kings are 11-4 at home overall. Philadelphia, 1-11 on the road, has lost four straight.

Jerry Stackhouse scored 22 points and Clarence Weatherspoon 21 for Philadelphia.

In Phoenix, Wayman Tisdale came off the bench to score 16 of his 26 points in the second half as the Suns reached the .500 mark (13-13) for the first time in nearly a month, 103-92 over the Denver Nuggets.

Charles Barkley and rookie Michael Finley each scored 19 points for the Suns, who have won four of their last five.

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Edwards and Rush honoured by Queen Elizabeth

LONDON (AP) — Europe's Ryder Cup captain Bernard Gallacher, triple jump world champion and record holder Jonathan Edwards and soccer striker Ian Rush are three leading British sports stars honoured Saturday by Queen Elizabeth II.

Gallacher, the non-playing captain whose European team won back the Ryder Cup from the United States at Oak Hill, Rochester, N.Y. in September, becomes an officer of the order of British Empire (OBE).

Edwards, who twice broke the triple jump world record with back-to-back jumps on the way to the world title in Göteborg, Sweden, in August, receives the less prestigious MBE (Member of the Order of British Empire).

Rush, who spent a season with Italy's Juventus in 1987-88 but has scored 224 goals in 14 years with Liverpool, also receives the MBE.

Two leading rugby union players, Welshman Robert Jones and England's Dean Richards, are awarded the MBE while England's rugby league captain, Wigan's Shaun Edwards, gets the OBE.

Richards, the world's most capped back row forward, receives an award despite gaining a 14-day suspension earlier this season for stamping and punching during a game for Leicester.

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Korean club crowned Asian soccer champions

RIYADH (AFP) — South Korea's Ilhwa Chunma needed sudden-death extra time to beat Saudi champions Al Nassr 1-0 and lift the 15th Asian Club Championship at the King Fahd International Stadium Friday.

The Koreans rarely threatened the Al Nassr goal but they made no mistake four minutes before the penalty shoot-out was due.

Korea's 1994 player of the year Ko Jeong Wook controlled a cross-field ball inside the penalty area before cutting back to Lee who squeezed the ball past Mudhi Aldosari at his near post.

Iran's Saipa beat last year's champions Thai Farmers Bank 2-1 in the third place play-off.

The Iranian champions as they hit the crossbar through Sabih Saran before Phanu what's 42nd minute close-range header put the Thais ahead.

The Thais doubled their lead 16 minutes after half-time when Worrawoot's excellent first touch allowed him to lob Jalal Mohbodi in the Saipa goal.

Saipa pulled a goal back within a minute when Mehdi Fononizadeh curled a free-kick around the Farmers' wall from the edge of the penalty area.

The Russian, whose contract with the Korean club expires this weekend, controlled the ball past Mudhi Aldosari at his near post.

And he did it without Stephen Sharpe, who was cut after requiring neck surgery that could end his career.

"Last year I thought was very productive, too, and going into the season, I didn't think we could be as productive as we were last year," said Favre, a five-year veteran.

"It was just an awesome year offensively for the whole unit," said Favre, who won the award with 38 votes from a nationwide panel of 88 sports writers and broadcasters.

Smith, the Dallas Cowboys' star running back, was second in balloting conducted by the Associated Press with a 33-vote total.

Favre had as many touchdown passes as voters. His 36 touchdowns were the most

ever in the NFC, third only to Dan Marino's seasons of 48 and 44. He passed for 4,413 yards, hitting 359 of 570 (63 per cent).

And he did it

NATO rejects Serb demand to postpone Sarajevo unification

ZUPANJA, Croatia (AP) — NATO rejected rebel Serbs' demand to postpone the re-unification of Sarajevo under the rule of their former enemies, while flooding forced the U.S. army to delay plans Saturday to move into Bosnia over a floating bridge.

U.S. forces also sustained their first casualty Saturday, a soldier who was wounded by a landmine in the northern Bosnian town of Bijela and rushed to the U.S. mobile military hospital at Zupanja.

Also Saturday, Brigadier General Ole Lysgaard Jorgensen of Denmark told reporters in Zagreb that hostile armies were withdrawing on all fronts, and pullbacks as specified by the peace treaty should be completed by Jan. 19.

The peace plan signed Dec. 14 in Paris calls for the Bosnian government to resume control of Serb-held areas of Sarajevo by March 19. However, Serbs, who have controlled some of those districts throughout the 3½-year war say they never will submit to rule by the Muslim-led government.

In seeking the delay, rebel Serb leaders said Sarajevo Serbs would flee if the transfer of power were not delayed. They warned that many, fearing reprisals from their old enemies and new rulers, would dig up bodies of their dead relatives to take with them.

Serbs suggested the fragile peace accord could be jeopardised without a delay. The Bosnian government has insisted that the transfer take place on time, and that Serbs with blood on their hands be brought to justice.

U.S. Admiral Leighton Smith, overall commander of the NATO force, had said earlier this week that he would consider shifting the deadline to delay the transfer of power. On Saturday, Capt. Mark Van Dyke read a statement from Adm. Smith saying the transfer of authority would begin Feb. 4, as indicated in the peace agree-

ment.

In his statement, Adm. Smith urged Bosnian Serbs in Sarajevo to stay put, saying the NATO force would provide for their security.

Meanwhile, U.S. army engineers gave up plans to move troops and armour into Bosnia on Saturday over a floating bridge because flooding made it too risky.

"We'll do it tomorrow morning," said Brigadier General James O'Neal, announcing the one-day postponement.

Gen. O'Neal said icy water spilled over the banks of the Sava River, separating Croatia and Bosnia, making part of the Croatian side too unsteady to anchor the pontoon bridge. He said the land will be reinforced with gravel before the bridge is finished and the crossing attempted.

The flooding is the latest setback in the deployment of 20,000 American soldiers and their hundreds of tanks, trucks and other equipment. The operation already has been delayed by bureaucracy, snow and fog.

Maj. Gen. William Nash, who will command the American troops patrolling north-eastern Bosnia, said he still expects all of his troops to be in position in a month.

A column of M1-Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles was lined up on the Croatian side of the river near Orasje, a town 100 kilometres north of Sarajevo.

Croatia's Hina news agency quoted U.S. engineers in Zupanja — on the Bosnian side of the river — as saying that due to flooding, the bridge would be some 130 metres longer than previously planned — 460 metres in total. It will be four metres wide.

By early afternoon Saturday, a 230-metre stretch of bridge reaching across a flood plain created two days ago when the Sava overflowed its Croatian bank was completed, and the engineers were bridging the river itself. A light coating of snow

dusted the bridge sections, contrasting with the gray of the sky above and the icy water below.

With the Americans becoming a familiar sight on the banks of the Sava, only a few Bosnian government soldiers and about a dozen civilians were on hand to watch the swollen, sluggish river carrying slowly moving army barges and boats and the three Blackhawk Choppers circling above.

NATO's supreme commander praised their work.

"The troops are rising to the occasion," said U.S. Gen. George Joulwan, shortly after his helicopter landed on the Croatian side of the river. "It's come a long way," he said of the bridge-building operation.

Despite the Americans' bridge troubles, Gen. Jorgensen said 35,000 of the 60,000 NATO-led troops that will enforce peace in Bosnia had been deployed in Bosnia and the surrounding region by Saturday.

The American soldier injured Saturday by a landmine was not identified, but his condition was said to be stable. Maj. Simon Haselock, a spokesman for the peace mission, said the incident occurred near the Croatian border.

One soldier who would not give his name said the victim was injured in the leg.

In Washington, a senior White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the soldiers' vehicle, a Humvee jeep, was destroyed.

Though all warning factors are committed to removing mines or mapping their locations under terms of the Bosnian peace treaty, the process has just begun and tens of thousands of explosive devices lie uncharted.

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The location of many never will be established because battlefields have shifted countless times during the nearly 4-year-old war.

By early afternoon Saturday, a 230-metre stretch of bridge reaching across a flood plain created two days ago when the Sava overflowed its Croatian bank was completed, and the engineers were bridging the river itself. A light coating of snow

was injured in the leg.

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